Design Guidelines
for the
Courthouse Area

Lexington, Kentucky

May 17, 2000

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Historic photographs are courtesy of the Kentucky Historical Society. Appreciation is expressed to Bettie Kerr and John D. Wright, Jr. for the use of their book *A Century in Photographs* as a key photographic resource.

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Introduction

This document presents design guidelines for the Courthouse Area in downtown Lexington, Kentucky. The area has been an important focus of civic activity for two centuries and during that time it has seen development stimulated by the construction of a series of court houses and other civic facilities. The buildings that stand reflect the efforts of citizens who worked and lived here and who used it as a center for cultural events. Now, entering the twenty-first century, the area once more anticipates substantial improvements in response to the construction of a new courts complex.

Policies Underlying the Guidelines

These guidelines seek to help manage change such that the traditional character of the area is respected while accommodating compatible improvements. They reflect the City's goals to promote economic development, enhance the image of the area and reuse its historic resources, which are set forth in the community's Comprehensive Plan:

"Urban design issues have recently become much more consequential to Lexington...Improving the quality of the built environment is a major goal of [the Comprehensive Plan]...Such improvements should begin in the heart of the urban county—downtown Lexington...Within the existing development, proper infill and redevelopment should be encouraged for continued vitality. However, some controls to ensure compatibility of infill and redevelopment [such as design guidelines] are also appropriate.

"The downtown core and surrounding downtown residential districts have developed in a compact manner with the majority of the buildings having been designed in classical older styles which exhibit extensive architectural detail. In some blocks overall urban design and building mass relationships must be considered so that new buildings can be compatible with nearby historically-significant commercial and residential structures. Several neighborhoods on the edges of downtown have Historic District overlays which provide for limited design review and control of redevelopment. However, the core downtown and residential areas to the northeast and southeast should have an appropriate design review and control mechanism. The variety of historically-significant residential and nonresidential structures deserve protection from incompatible infill and redevelopment, particularly those areas northeast and southeast of Main Street and in the vicinity of the courthouse."
— (*1996 Comprehensive Plan*, pages 4-16)

Comprehensive Plan Policy Base, continued...

Encourage protection of historic resources through compatible use and reuse of historic sites and structures.

The Comprehensive Plan also provides a clear policy base for design guidelines in the first three themes of the plan and several goals and objectives:

Theme 1:
"Enabling the creation, growth and retention of jobs that promote a strong, progressive economy."
A key objective is to encourage the creation of jobs within the project area. Special opportunities exist, of course, with the construction of the courthouse for professional offices and related services as well as residential use. These design guidelines will help promote designs that support this theme while encouraging investment in the area.

Theme 2:
"Promoting the downtown as a regional commercial, office, government, residential and cultural center focal point within the Bluegrass region."
These design guidelines establish a vision for renovation and new construction that facilitates the mix of uses desired to make the Courthouse Area the focal point for the region.

Theme 3:
"Preserving, protecting and maintaining existing residential neighborhoods in a manner that ensures stability and the highest quality of life for all residents."
Development within the Courthouse Area can impact the edges of abutting residential neighborhoods, including historic districts. The treatment of these transitional conditions is a special focus of these guidelines.

Goal II:
"Guide the physical development of the community."
Regulatory tools such as zoning, land use regulations and design guidelines are effective ways to guide the physical changes seen on the Lexington landscape.

Goal IV:
"Ensure the vitality of the downtown."
The *objectives* listed with Lexington's goal of ensuring vitality in the Downtown are very much the same as the reasons many communities choose to develop design guidelines—to protect investments and to ensure stability and livability.

• Objective A: Promote and expand the role of the Downtown area as the logical community location of major regional business, commerce, governmental administration, cultural and recreational activities and entertainment.

• Objective D: Formulate a realistic plan for the future of the Downtown, and foster public-private efforts to maintain, rehabilitate and redevelop Downtown.

• Objective E: Recognize and preserve significant architectural features and encourage new construction to be compatible with these significant features.

• Objective F: Encourage increased Downtown residential uses through new construction, restoration, and redevelopment which is compatible with surrounding land uses and design.

Goal X:

"Protect and preserve Fayette County's significant historic and cultural heritage."

• Objective A: Encourage protection of historic resources through compatible use and reuse of historic sites and structures.

• Objective B: Encourage renovation, development and maintenance of historic residential and commercial structures.

• Objective C: Encourage protection of significant historic resources through the documentation and designation of historic districts and historic landmarks.

• Objective G: Encourage compatible design in public and private developments and structures which serve to reinforce the fabric of the community.

The Comprehensive Plan also defines historic preservation as an objective, which is relevant to the Courthouse Area:

"Historic and architecturally significant buildings are a vital part of Lexington-Fayette County's physical form, because they create a unique place to live and work. A well-planned community incorporates the new and the old, thus attracting businesses, residents, and tourists seeking a unique physical and cultural environment."

These goals and policy statements from the Comprehensive Plan underscore the community's commitment to the preservation of Lexington's cultural and architectural resources and to urban design that will enhance the vitality of the city core. This document builds on these policy directives and provides a means for the community to encourage development that respects these resources.

Comprehensive Plan Policy Base, continued...
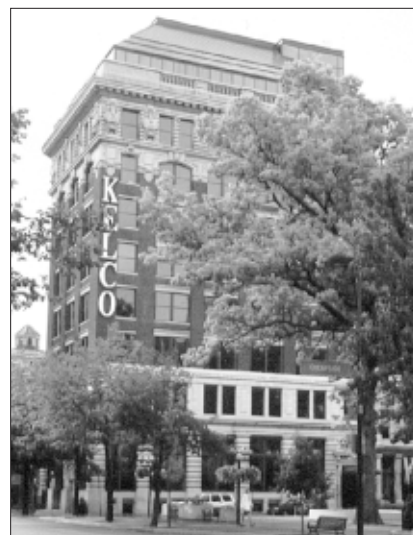
Encourage renovation, development and maintenance of historic commercial structures.

Overview of the Design Guidelines

The guidelines define those important features of the established context that should be respected when improvements occur. It is important to note that the guidelines neither dictate taste nor assure good design. Rather, they are intended to be a means for balancing the traditional qualities of the Courthouse Area with the demands of contemporary use.

The design guidelines provide a basis for making decisions about the appropriate treatment of existing buildings, including historic resources, and the design of compatible new construction. They also serve as educational and planning tools for property owners and their design professionals who seek to make improvements that may affect the character of the Courthouse Area.

Each design guideline contains the following components:

1. Design topic

Within each chapter, the information is divided into pertinent design topics. For example, in *Chapter 3: Guidelines for Historic Properties*, the subtopic, "Design of Additions," is among those discussed. This organization allows the user to quickly select the specific design topics within a chapter that are relevant.

2. Design guidelines

The specific design guidelines are presented as **bold face** statements under each design topic. These are also numbered to indicate their relative position within the chapter and to aid in specific reference in the review process.

3. Supplementary information

Also provided with the design guidelines are supplementary requirements, which clarify the primary design guideline statement and may suggest specific methods for complying with it. This may include additional design requirements or may provide an expanded explanation. These statements are listed as bullets (•).

4. Illustrations

Photographs and sketches may also be provided to clarify the intent of a design guideline or its supplementary information.

A typical design guideline in this document contains four components:

First, a design topic heading allows the user to quickly select relevant categories of design.

Second, the design guideline itself is presented as a numbered statement in bold type. This sets forth a basic principle for treatment of a selected design topic.

Third, supplementary requirements are listed under the guideline. Preceded by bullets (•), these clarify the primary design guideline statement and may suggest specific methods for complying with it.

Fourth, an illustration, in the form of a sketch or photograph, depicts a method of complying with the guideline.

Design of Additions

3.31 An addition may be made to the roof of a building if it does the following:
- An addition should be set back from a primary, character-defining facade, to preserve the perception of the historic scale of the building.

Roof addition set back from the front
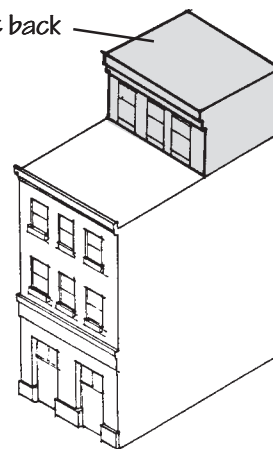
A sample design guideline.

Basic Principles of Design in the Courthouse Area

Principle 1.
Maintain a clear definition of the street edge.
Traditionally, the edge of the sidewalk was clearly defined as a "street wall," which helped define the street as an urban space. This feature should be maintained.
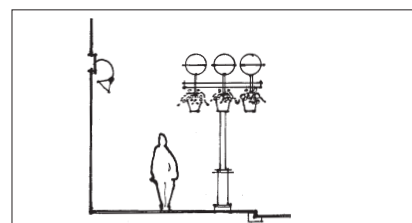
Principle 2.
Enhance the street level as an inviting place for pedestrians.
Providing features that are visually interesting and that are in human scale is essential. These may include storefront windows, display cases, art and landscaping.
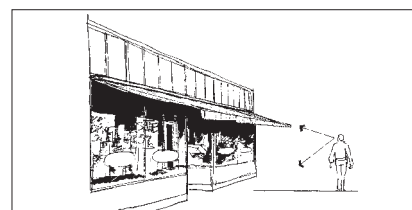
Principle 3.
Relate to traditional buildings in the area.
Traditional buildings combine to establish a sense of continuity in the area, while also accommodating variety in design and detail. As properties are improved, they should enhance the overall image of the area as a place to do business. Each building can help contribute to this visual continuity while also meeting an individual owner's needs.

Principle 4.
If the building is an historic structure, then respect its earlier character.

Preservation of Lexington's heritage is important to its sense of community and its economic development. Many of the structures in the Courthouse Area have historic value, even some that have experienced alterations. It is important to consider the significance of their character-defining features, including basic forms, materials and details when planning improvements.

Additional Principles for the Design of Commercial Buildings

Generally, most buildings in the Courthouse Area should be retail-oriented at the street level. For them, these basic principles also apply:

Keep it simple.

An individual building should have a simple, **unified design** that serves as a frame for the windows that display goods or reveal services offered inside.

Use the entire building front to establish a design impact.

Coordinate upper and lower floors into a single design concept, even if the upper floors are not a part of the ground floor business. This can serve the "attention-getting" function and can be much more effective than a large sign.

Develop a clear presentation to the street.

A single, clear design concept that avoids clutter and directs the customer's eye is important. The design scheme should easily lead the viewer's attention to displays of goods, views of activities inside and ultimately to the business entrance. Use only a few colors throughout and keep signs to a minimum. Place them where they will lead a customer to products or activities.

The design principles described above underlie the specific guidelines that appear in the chapters that follow.

1. Design Character

The Courthouse Area contains a mix of buildings that reflect the evolution of the community and convey the vitality of life in Lexington. The history of the city and county is closely tied to it and those features of the existing context that the community values are directly related to its early development. This chapter presents a brief summary of historical events that helped shape the courthouse area and it also highlights those key features of the built environment that contribute to its character today.

Historic Overview

Lexington has grown from one small cabin located along the Middle Branch of Elkhorn Creek in 1775 to the urban center of Kentucky's bluegrass region. Settlement of Lexington began in June of 1775, when a group of land speculators, hunters and surveyors from Pennsylvania were staking claims in the rich, lush meadows and woodlands of central Kentucky and were particularly attracted to an area that they later named Lexington—named in honor of the Massachusetts town where the Minute Men first confronted the British troops just two months before. By the end of the nineteenth century, Lexington had grown to be an important cultural, social and economic center and was often referred to as "Athens of the West."

An early street scene from the area is filled with Federal style buildings, while the structure in the lower right exhibits Greek Revival details. Italianate features are seen on the building on the lower left.

Early History

Growth was slow in the early pioneer town. In 1781, city founders laid out 710 acres of land in a grid pattern to form what became the heart of the town of Lexington. The Virginia Legislature, which had jurisdiction over the area, approved the proposed town plat. Eleven years later, in 1792, Kentucky separated from the State of Virginia and became the Commonwealth of Kentucky, the fifteenth state in the Union. Lexington was not incorporated as a city until 1832.

Farm produce, animal products, hemp and tobacco provided the foundation of Lexington's growing trade business. As the Indian threat began to diminish, farms began to expand out into the county and hemp, tobacco, grain and livestock production began to flourish. These products were traded for household staples, equipment and the like and then shipped out of the area by the merchants. It was more profitable to convert some grains into whiskey before export—thus an industry, with which many people identify Kentucky, was born.

By 1785 the frontier town of Lexington began to attract settlers seeking new land and merchants and artisans to serve the settlers. Governmental and institutional functions also were established in the area. The first Fayette County courthouse was built in 1782. At the same time, Rev. Rankin also built a two-story log house for his residence on High (formerly Hill) Street, just outside of the Courthouse Area. This house, later moved to 314 South Mill Street, is one of the oldest surviving structures in Lexington and graciously illustrates

A photograph taken after the construction of the First National Bank and Trust Building (1913-14) focuses on the current courthouse (1900). Cars fill the public space of Cheapside.

the early, more rustic structures that were found in the early residential area downtown.

Lexington was growing as a regional trade center, and served as the retail and wholesale hub for surrounding communities in central Kentucky. It was also the exporting center for Kentucky-produced goods, shipping hemp, tobacco and whiskey to Cincinnati, St. Louis and even as far away as New Orleans. Building construction during this period was dominated by the Federal style, with its graceful, symmetrical red brick houses.

By the mid-1800s, growth and prosperity transformed Lexington from a frontier, trading town to an impressive urban community. Many frontier log cabins were torn down, other log houses were covered with clapboard, and stone and brick residential and commercial structures began to dominate the landscape.

In 1831, entrepreneurs began building Lexington's first railroad. When the Lexington & Ohio Rail Road had finished construction in 1852, Lexington was connected to the Ohio River—a major trade route of the era.

An aerial view of the Courthouse Area, circa 1925, illustrates some basic features that most buildings had in common, even though they spanned more than 130 years of development. Structures align at the sidewalk edge and are constructed of masonry. Storefronts define a pedestrian zone at the street level and upper-story windows have similar dimensions.

This photo was taken from the southeast corner of Main Street and the Union Station Viaduct circa 1915.

The Post Civil War Period

When the Civil War began, Lexington's economy slowed to a halt. Unlike many other Southern cities, Lexington was relatively unscathed physically and its housing and commercial buildings remained intact. A slow, post-war recovery was followed by growth in the 1880s, during which rail service expanded to five lines. These rail lines strengthened Lexington's commercial connection with Cincinnati and Louisville and tied Lexington to the mineral and timber-rich resources of southeastern Kentucky. The Louisville and Nashville Railroad (L&NRR) depot was conveniently located between Vine and Water Streets at South Mill Street, only two blocks away from the Courthouse, and contributed to business development along Main Street. Agricultural-based trade, particularly tobacco, continued to dominate economic activity in Lexington through the end of the nineteenth century.

Public transportation helped support development in the emerging Courthouse Area. Travelers by train arrived in Lexington at the nearby L&NRR depot. The City licensed "omnibuses" (i.e., over-sized horse-drawn stagecoaches) to serve limited routes throughout Lexington. Then, the Lexington Street Railway Company built a mule and horse-drawn streetcar system to serve downtown, with nine miles of track laid along Main, Broadway, Limestone, Third, Race and Vine. By 1882, the Belt Railway Company had began operating an electric trolley car system that, by the end of the decade, had replaced the animal-drawn streetcars. During this period, many of the downtown streets were paved with brick or creosoted wooden blocks.

The courthouse square between Cheapside and North Upper Streets and between Main and Short Streets served as the focal point for civic activities. Market days and court days drew throngs to the streets around the Courthouse, particularly along Cheapside. The County's third courthouse had been built on the courthouse square in 1806, but almost from its inception it was criticized by lawyers, judges and visitors for its rather unappealing interior. By 1882, activities of the courts and other county offices had grown enough to pressure County officials to authorize razing the Courthouse and building a new, larger one. This fourth courthouse was completed in 1885 and was a Renaissance-Eclectic structure, with a towering superstructure reaching 100 feet from the ground. In 1897, the Courthouse was totally destroyed by fire, requiring the County to build yet a fifth courthouse. This new structure was designed in the Richardsonian Romanesque style, which was quite popular at the time, and was completed in 1900.

Extensive construction and expansion of the physical size of Lexington occurred around the turn of the century. This growth reflected development of the city's traditional economic base of wholesale, retail and transportation industries. Trade and transportation of burley tobacco rapidly expanded in importance, replacing the dwindling activity in the hemp market. The horse industry also continued to grow, with many large horse farms springing up in the countryside around Lexington after the Civil War. The owners of these farms with their sprawling bluegrass pastures and palatial mansions generally were not the formerly landed-gentry of traditional, pre-war Lexington but were often new residents of Kentucky.
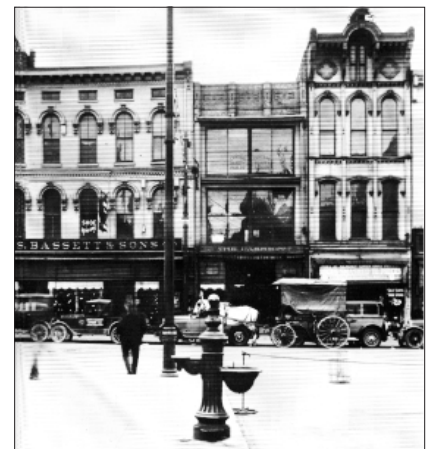
The Early to Mid-1900s

When the Wall Street crash of 1929 and the ensuing Great Depression occurred, Lexington reacted quite mildly. While no one was predicting catastrophe, the city did not remain unscathed: in 1931, Fayette National Bank closed its doors; city workers lost their jobs; doctors, professors and city school teachers all took cuts in salary; and Lexington church women opened a soup kitchen. One-fourth of Fayette County's families were receiving some form of financial relief by June of 1933. However, because the economies of Lexington and Fayette County were not based on the manufacturing industry, the Depression had a milder impact here than it did in much of the rest of the country.

In 1938, *Forbes Business Magazine* called Lexington one of the most prosperous business centers, and a "bright spot" in the nation, even though roughly six percent of its total population (or approximately twenty percent of its work force) was still unemployed. By 1940, the effects of the Depression had all but disappeared from Lexington, and the city of almost 50,000 residents was enjoying a strong economy and growing population. The appearance of Art Moderne and Deco building styles reflected signs of a healthy economy during this time.

The south side of Main Street opposite Cheapside, circa 1925.

After World War II

After the end of World War II, life in Lexington returned to its pre-war status of a strong economy and growing population. But no one was ready for the changes that were going to occur over the next thirty-five years and that were going to make Lexington one of the fastest growing cities in the country. Lexington's economic base received a major boost when industrial and manufacturing companies began building plants in the formerly trade-oriented county. General Electric, Dixie Cup (a Container Corporation of America subsidiary), IBM's electric typewriter division, and R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company were some of the larger industrial companies to

Main Street looking east from Mill. Photograph taken in 1938.

locate manufacturing or warehousing facilities in Fayette County. Smaller companies also came to the area and added to the growth. Growth in manufacturing jobs brought in many new residents, caused major growth in schools, housing and community services, as well as had a positive effect on Lexington's traditional trade center businesses.

This growth stimulated construction throughout the region in offices, commercial centers and new neighborhoods. Some retail businesses left the Courthouse Area to serve this growing population from new locations. While some retail activity shifted, new high rise office buildings appeared in the area. Streetscape enhancements in the 1970s brought a new image to the area and the urban county government signaled its continuing commitment to downtown by locating its offices in the old Lafayette Hotel at Harrison Avenue and Main Street. Then, in the late 1990s, the urban county government set upon a major improvement effort, with construction of a new courthouse complex as the centerpiece. The result is an area that strongly reflects its historic roots while also incorporating a variety of new buildings.

The Character of the Courthouse Area Today

Early photographs provide insight into the design features of traditional building types and the manner in which these combined to create streetscapes in the Courthouse Area. They demonstrate that most buildings were built at the sidewalk edge, thereby defining a "street wall," and that brick and stone were the dominant construction materials. Additional information about the character and development of the area is found in a series of maps produced by the Sanborn Fire Insurance Company. The company documented the location and footprint of each building in the area, periodically from the late 1800s through the 1950s. These maps, combined with historic photographs, convey the character-defining features that form the framework of the area's context today.

A rectilinear grid dominates.

A Rectilinear Grid Dominates

The squared intersections of streets established the basic framework for the organization of lots, which in turn set the character of building shape and placement in the area.

Buildings Align in Plan

Most buildings, particularly the predominant commercial structures, are sited at the sidewalk edge and therefore the building fronts align.

Buildings Fill the Widths of Their Lots

Commercial buildings are constructed out to the side lot lines, creating a solid wall along the sidewalk edge.

Rear Setbacks of Buildings Vary

Variations in building sizes are typically reflected on the backsides. While many structures occupy the entire depths of their properties, several do not. In general, the earlier, smaller buildings left room on the rear of their sites.

Buildings align in plan.

Storefront Heights Align

Most first floors were constructed to relatively similar heights and, because the lower levels of the building fronts were primarily glass, the storefronts created a uniform line along the street edge. This was further emphasized with cornices and moldings that capped the storefronts.

A "Wall" of Buildings Two to Four Stories in Height is Defined

The first two to four stories are typically defined with windows of similar heights and with moldings that align along the block to express the traditional scale of the street.

Storefront heights align.

A block scale of two to four stories is typical. Even taller buildings have lower-story elements that reflect this tradition.
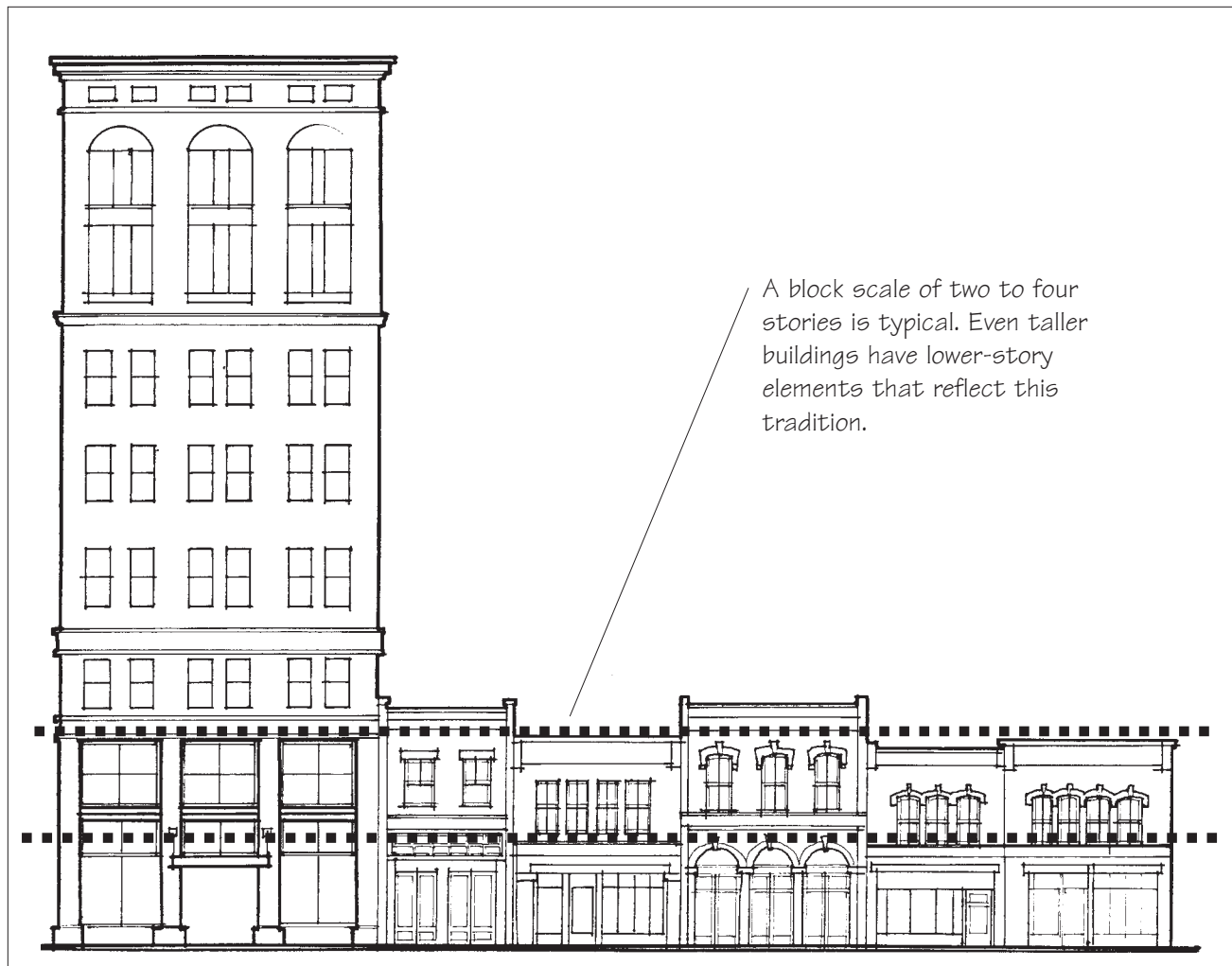
Most buildings in the Courthouse Area share a variety of design features, including the alignment of horizontal moldings and cornices. These help to unify individual blocks, even when building heights and styles vary.

Overall Building Heights Vary in the Area

Most buildings stand from two to four stories in height, but several vary from this pattern. A few are one story and others are taller than the norm. However, most of the taller buildings appear to fit within the street character: they typically are of masonry construction that matches that of shorter structures nearby and the lower levels relate in scale and alignment of horizontal details. They also align in plan at the sidewalk edge.

Building Widths Appear To Be Within a Narrow Range

Many buildings convey the dimensions of a single building lot. Others that are larger often reflect the underlying set of lots with an "articulation" of facade details. Vertical elements, including columns and pilasters, often express the location of the individual lots. This helps to create a rhythm of building fronts along the street.

Masonry Building Materials Are Predominant

Brick and stone are shaped in units that are similar in size and these are laid in a manner that establishes textures along the street that are visually interesting and help to establish a sense of human scale.

Upper-story windows create a pattern across many building fronts. Most upper-story windows are of similar sizes and they use similar spacing patterns. They typically are vertically proportioned and their arches and sills tend to align as well. All of these features combine to create a pattern of evenly spaced openings and of horizontal features that align along the block.

Masonry building materials are predominant.

These specific features of the built environment result in even more fundamental characteristics that are essential ingredients of the area:

A Sense of Visual Continuity Exists

Because most buildings share a variety of the design features described above, the area conveys a sense of visual relatedness, of being a "place." Within this sense of visual continuity, however, variety and accent occur. Building styles, for example, vary widely, reflecting their various periods of construction. In fact, each building varies from its neighbors in some manner, either a difference in scale, style or materials. But, for each design feature that varies from its neighbors, many others are shared. Thus, a sense of continuity is maintained, while accommodating individuality in design.

Streets Are Oriented to Pedestrians

Key building elements, including windows, doors and details, are scaled to pedestrians. Masonry materials also contribute to this pedestrian-friendly scale. The storefronts provide views to activities inside, creating interest for passersby. Sidewalks also are of dimensions that are comfortable for pedestrians to pass. This invites walking.

Streets are oriented to pedestrians.

Civic Buildings and Spaces Provide Accents in the Streetscape

While commercial buildings align along the street edge, civic buildings typically stand apart. The old Courthouse, for example, sits in the center of a block, surrounded by a lawn. These types of buildings also may vary more widely in their forms and details.

Civic buildings and spaces provide accents in the streetscape.
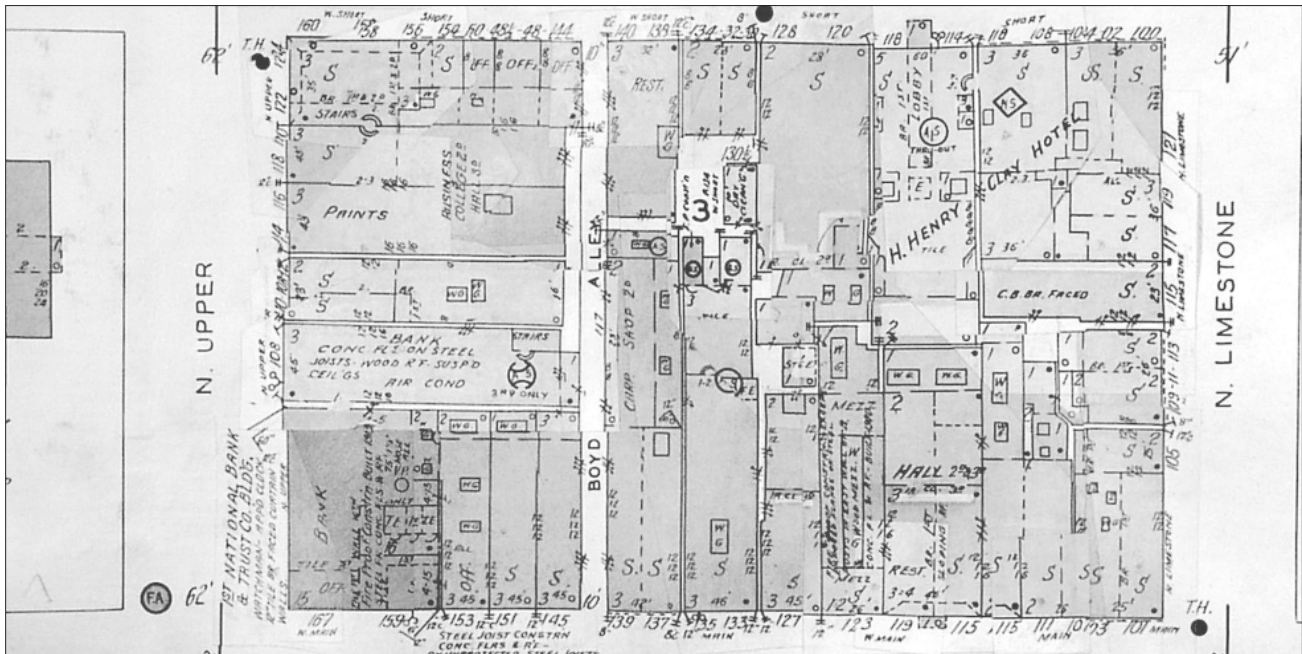
A detail of a Sanborn Map of 1934 illustrates a portion of the block bounded by North Upper Street, Short Street, North Limestone Street and Main. Building fronts align at the sidewalk edge and many structures occupy the full widths of their lots. A few alleys and pedestrian ways provide access to the interior of the block. The sixteen-story First National Bank and Trust Building, designed by the New York architectural firm of McKim, Mead and White and constructed in 1913-14, is located at the lower left corner. The edge of the courthouse building appears at the left edge of the image.

Building Types and Styles

This section provides a brief overview of various architectural styles and building types found in the area. However, the list is not exhaustive. Certain architectural styles, or combinations thereof, may exist that are not included. Property owners should review these descriptions carefully. In many cases the design guidelines make reference to the characteristics of the styles that are presented here.

There are clear examples in the area of Federal, Italianate, Art Deco and Classical Revival type structures. A common practice, however, was building in the "vernacular." These simple structures closely reflect traditions of building in their respective periods of construction and are sometimes decorated with features that come from a variety of styles.

Commercial Building Types

Most buildings in the Courthouse Area are variations on the traditional American commercial storefront. These buildings were designed for retail-related functions on the ground level, and therefore relatively large openings were used to maximize visibility and access to goods and services offered inside. Most are built to one, two or three stories, although some rise higher. The front wall is constructed at the sidewalk edge and is of masonry. Upper-story windows are smaller, with vertically oriented openings. The upper floor appears more solid than transparent. The following building types are seen in the Courthouse Area:

Typical storefront components.

pediment
cornice
upper story windows
midbelt cornice
transom
display window
recessed entry
kickplate

Although window openings have been altered on both floors, this building exhibits the simple forms of Federal buildings. A gable roof, with the ridge line parallel to the street, is a typical feature.

Greek Revival pilasters, or attached columns, adorn the upper level of this structure, which also exhibits the sloping roof form of a Federal period building.

Federal
• circa 1790-1820

The Federal style was the dominant design in Lexington from 1790 to 1820. Related to the popular Georgian style, buildings of the Federal period, as well as Federal-influenced vernacular structures, are commonly a simple box, two or more rooms deep. Doors and windows are arranged with a regular symmetry to allow adequate ventilation. Many of the buildings seen in the area were constructed according to this vernacular form.

Characteristics
- Side-gabled roof
- Brick or stone construction
- Joined chimney
- Parapet walls
- Wooden shutters
- Wide doors with transom and sidelights
- Galleries
- Dormers

Many of the Federal buildings were later transformed into more "stylish" structures by the application of other period detailing, then in vogue. In many cases a structure may not have been altered until many years after it was built. These changes were often based on architectural styles that were popular throughout the country at the time.

Greek Revival
• circa 1820-1850

The Greek Revival style became quite popular during the middle of the nineteenth century. By 1850, it was seen in almost all settled areas in the nation, gaining a presence in Kentucky at that time. Based on classical detailing that originated in ancient Greece, these buildings are known primarily for columns with Doric, Ionic or Corinthian capitals. Other Greek Revival detailing includes classical entablatures, simple window surrounds and door surrounds consisting of transom and sidelights.

Characteristics
- Rounded columns
- Pediment roof
- Tall first-floor windows
- Entablature
- Doors with transom, side and corner lights
- Gabled or hipped roof
- Frieze band windows
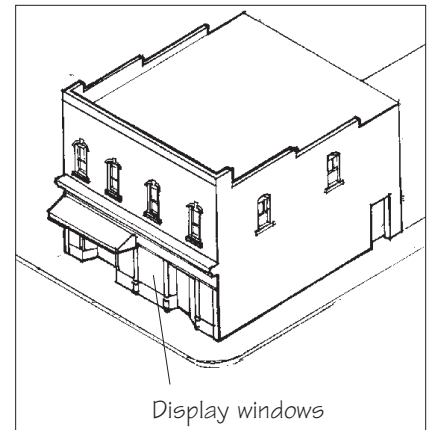
Vernacular Commercial Storefront
• circa 1860-1920

The vernacular commercial storefront of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries appears in commercial districts throughout the country, including downtown Lexington. This building type is divided into two distinct bands. The first floor is more commonly transparent, so goods can be displayed, while the upper floors are usually reserved for offices, residential and warehousing functions. At the storefront, a kickplate is found below the display window while above, a smaller band of glass, a transom, is seen. Also, the main door is frequently recessed.

These buildings have brick facades, often with stone detailing. Ornamental detail exists, but is simple, and is limited to a shallow molding as a cornice. Some cornices were made of wood or masonry, while others were made of metal. Although construction of these buildings began as early as 1860 and continued until 1920, the majority were constructed at the turn of the century. Many carry Italianate detailing.

Characteristics
- Larger display windows
- Transom lights
- Kickplate
- Recessed entry
- Double doors
- Tall second-story windows
- Cornice

Display windows

Vernacular commercial storefront.

A vernacular commercial storefront.

Detail of an Italianate building.

Italianate
• circa 1850-1885

Originally inspired by Renaissance buildings of Italy, this blending of classical and romantic features became one of the most popular styles in the United States. Because of its ornate details, such as bracketed cornices, this style was easily adapted to storefronts. The details and features of this style were capable of being interpreted in wood, masonry or iron. With this adaptability and the sensibilities of the times, its popularity grew, particularly with those building townhouses and commercial buildings.

Characteristics
- Double-hung, narrow windows, often with round arch heads
- Window panes are either one-over-one or two-over-two
- Protruding sills
- Ornate treatment of the eaves, including the use of brackets, medallions and dentil courses
- Quoins at building corners
- Cresting along roof ridges
- Transom, often curved, above the front door
- Brackets, modillions and dentil courses
- Flat roof
- Overall, a vertical emphasis in building proportions

A deep cornice, supported on brackets, is a typical Italianate feature.

Classical Revival

• circa 1890-1920

The Classical Revival style was originally based upon interpretations of classical Roman models, particularly in terms of order, symmetry and detail. Usually a composition of formal and symmetrical features enriched by elaborative details and often emphasized by a pedimented or projecting pavilion, this style was adaptable to wood, brick and stone construction. Partially due to this, the style was popular in many regions of the country, particularly for builders wishing to distinguish their structures from older ones in the community.

Characteristics

- Flat roof with parapet and metal or cast stone cornice
- Cast stone jack arches
- Elaborate entrance
- Keystone lintels
- Sash windows with heavy dividers or muntins
- Usually large, elaborate brick structure (often red)
- Ornate moldings, such as dentils and modillions
- Round columns with complex capitals
- Dormers
- Prominent center window on second story, often arched or curved

Contrasting trim elements and extensive detailing are features of Classical Revival buildings.

Masonry walls, usually with rough-faced, squared stonework and round-topped arches over windows are typical features of the Richardsonian Romanesque style.

Richardsonian Romanesque
• circa 1880-1910

Developed by the prominent Boston architect, Henry Richardson, the Romanesque, or Richardsonian Romanesque, style was commonly used for large public buildings beginning in the 1880s—following suit to Richardson's Trinity Church in Boston. Romanesque structures are always of masonry construction.

Characteristics
* Masonry walls, usually with rough-faced, squared stonework
* Most have towers with conical roofs
* Round-topped arches over windows, porch supports or entrance
* Deeply recessed openings
* Decorative colonnettes around windows
* Decorative floral patterns on column capitals, on wall surfaces and around openings.

The Fayette County Courthouse, constructed in 1900, exhibits Richardsonian arches and stone detailing.

Art Moderne

• circa 1930-1940

Often closely related to the International style in appearance, the Art Moderne style was devised as a way of incorporating the machine aesthetic into architecture, in the sense that buildings could emulate motion and efficiency. It is also referred to as the **Streamlined Moderne**, and always carried the aura of the futuristic. Whatever the term, in this case architecture followed industrial design, as "the slick look" was used for everything from irons to baby carriages.

Characteristics
• An asymmetrical facade, with a combination of rounded corners and angular shapes
• Use of glass block
• Use of metal sash windows with small panes, often placed at corners
• Horizontal bands, referred to as "speed bands"
• References to ocean liners, as in the use of "porthole" windows and metal railings

The Woolworth Building exhibits Art Moderne features. The streamlined sign band is the most distinctive feature.

The style is most easily identified by its architectural ornament, which includes stylized floral patterns and repetitive geometric forms incorporating sharp angles and segments of circles.

International style features include horizontal bands of glass.

Art Deco
• circa 1930-1950

This style is related to Art Moderne in its decoration of surfaces, but in the case of Art Deco, the lines are angular rather than curvilinear. The style is most easily identified by its architectural ornament, which includes stylized floral patterns and repetitive geometric forms incorporating sharp angles and segments of circles. Zigzags, chevrons and diamond patterns are typical and often are applied as decorative moldings or are integral to masonry patterns themselves. Glass brick and rounded or angular corner windows were often used. Building entrances were embellished with decoration which extended to hardware and light fixtures. Glass brick panels were often lit from behind at night with colored lights.

Characteristics
• Variety of colors and textures
• Stucco and tile combined
• Projecting sunshades
• Rounded corner windows
• Colored brick or tile
• Zigzag or chevron moldings
• Molded metal panels or grills
• Stylized floral patterns
• Repetitive geometric forms

International
• circa 1935 - 1970

Schools of architectural design in the modern age required new approaches to basic design. The elevator and the skyscraper went hand in hand. In the years after World War I, architects saw a chance to contribute to a new and better world. For architecture, this meant rejecting most conventional design standards. Structural systems were emphasized and curtain walls were designed to reflect modular compositions. Few buildings were constructed during this period in the Courthouse Area.

Characteristics
• Smooth wall surfaces
• Flat roof line
• Horizontal emphasis
• Horizontal bands of glass
• Minimal ornament and detail
• Glass, steel and other manufactured materials

2. General Design Guidelines

These design guidelines apply to all improvement projects in the Courthouse Area, including new buildings and alterations to existing structures of all types. (An additional chapter provides supplemental guidelines for historic buildings.) It is important to note that, while emphasis is placed on respecting historic resources, change is anticipated in the area; it is not to be "frozen in time." However, alterations and new construction should occur in a manner that respects the traditional design context. These guidelines are based on that policy.

The Courthouse Area conveys a sense of a time and place, which is expressed through its numerous historic and traditional buildings. This character should be maintained. When new building does occur, or an existing structure is altered, it should be in a manner that reinforces the basic character-defining features of the area. Such features include the way in which a building is located on its site, the manner in which it faces the street, its materials and the general alignment of architectural elements and details along a block. When these design variables are arranged in a new building to be similar to those seen traditionally in the area, visual compatibility results.
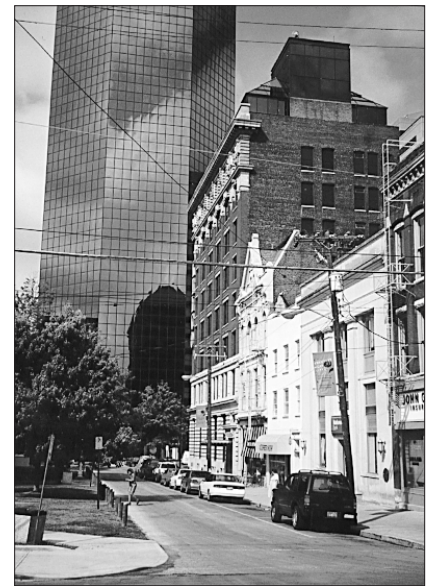
Building heights vary in the area, yet the scale and character of the first floors are quite similar.

The Courthouse Area conveys a sense of a time and place, which is expressed through its numerous historic and traditional buildings.

Storefronts dominate the street level throughout the area.

Locate the front building wall at the sidewalk line when feasible.

Where a building must be set back from the sidewalk, use landscape elements to define the edge.

Site Plan

Most structures in the Courthouse Area contribute to a strong "building wall" along the street because they align at the front lot line and are usually built out to the full width of the parcel, to the side lot lines. Although small gaps do occur between some structures, these are exceptions. These site plan characteristics should be preserved.

2.1 Maintain the alignment of buildings at the sidewalk edge.

- Locate the front building wall at the sidewalk line when feasible. (See the map on page 16 for an example of traditional building siting patterns.)
- Where a building must be set back from the sidewalk, use landscape elements to define the sidewalk edge. (See also *Chapter 5: Public Streetscape Improvements*.)

2.2 Orient the primary entrance of a building toward the street.

- A building should have a clearly-defined primary entrance. For most commercial buildings, this should be a recessed entryway.
- A secondary public entrance to commercial spaces is also encouraged on a larger building.
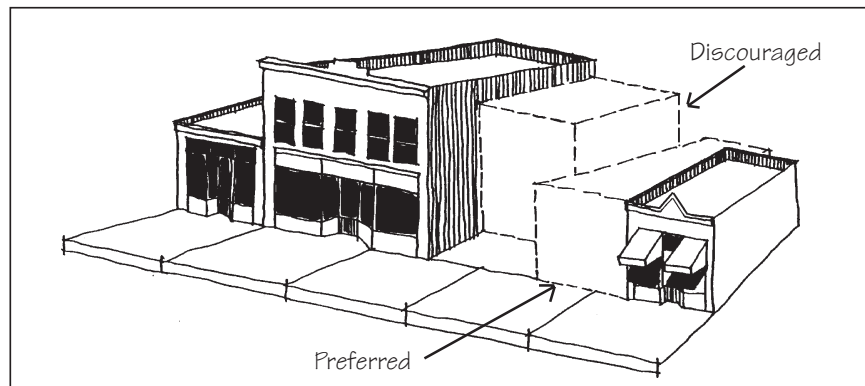
Align the building front at the sidewalk edge.

Photo left, before: The street wall is broken with a vacant lot. Photo right, after: A new building maintains alignment at the sidewalk edge.

Architectural Character

While it is important that new buildings and alterations be compatible with the historic context, it is not necessary that they imitate older building styles. In fact, stylistically distinguishing new buildings from their older neighbors in the Courthouse Area is preferred, when the overall design reinforces traditional development patterns.

2.3 New interpretations of traditional building styles are encouraged.

• A new design that draws upon the fundamental similarities among older buildings in the area without copying them is preferred. This will allow it to be seen as a product of its own time and yet be compatible with its historic neighbors.
• The literal imitation of older historic styles is discouraged.
• In essence, infill should be a balance of new and old in design.

This contemporary interpretation of a storefront includes a recessed entry and transom element.

New interpretations of traditional building styles are encouraged.

This contemporary cornice element includes the year of the building's construction.

Simplified interpretations of vernacular commercial storefronts are also appropriate.

2.4 A new building should incorporate a base, a middle and a cap.

• Traditionally, buildings were composed of these three basic elements. Interpreting this tradition will help reinforce the visual continuity of the area.
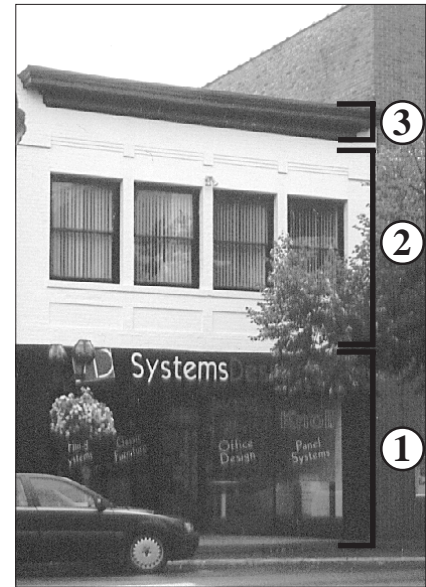
These three buildings in the Courthouse Area all incorporate the basic building blocks: (1) base, (2) middle and (3) cap.

Window sills, moldings and midbelt cornices are among those elements in this new building that align with existing buildings.

Mass, Scale and Form

Building heights vary substantially in the Courthouse Area and yet there is a strong sense of similarity in scale. This is in part because most buildings are within two to four stories in height. In addition, most buildings have features at the lower levels that are similar in scale. First floors, for example, are similar in height. Other lower floors are also defined by moldings that align along the block, which contribute to a perceived uniformity in height to pedestrians. A variety in building heights in new construction is, therefore, appropriate. However, the dominant scale of two to four stories should be maintained. This may be accomplished by literally constructing a building within this traditional height range; in other cases, design elements that reflect this traditional height may be incorporated into larger structures.

2.5 A new building should maintain the alignment of horizontal elements along the block.
- Window sills, moldings and midbelt cornices are among those elements that may align.

2.6 Floor-to-floor heights should appear to be similar to those seen historically.
- In particular, the windows in new construction should appear similar in height to those seen traditionally.

New construction should appear similar in mass and scale to structures found traditionally in the Courthouse Area.
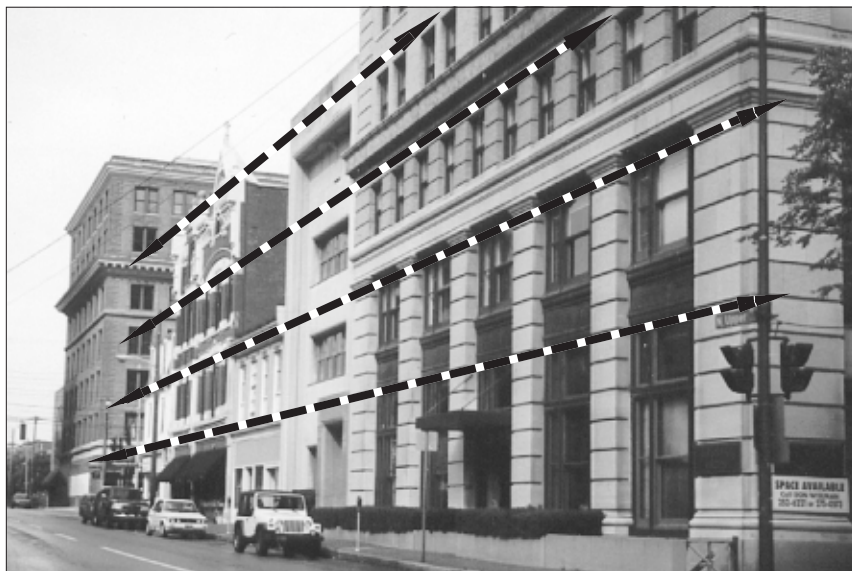
A new building should maintain the alignment of horizontal elements along the block. Window sills, moldings and midbelt cornices are among those elements that may align.

Mass, scale and form, continued...

Consider dividing larger buildings into modules, such as this, to reflect the traditional building widths seen in the area.

2.7 Consider dividing a larger building into "modules" that are similar in scale to buildings seen historically.

- If a larger building is divided into "modules," they should be expressed three-dimensionally throughout the entire building.

This single infill building is divided into smaller building modules that reflect traditional building widths. Upper floors step back from the front, thus maintaining the traditional two-story scale of the street.


A part of this contemporary infill building is a parking structure which is concealed with a "wrap" of office and retail uses. The openings in the parking section of the development also utilize window proportions similar to those seen historically.

2.8 Maintain the established building scale of two to four stories in height.

- Develop a primary facade that is in scale and alignment with surrounding historic buildings.
- If a building must be taller, consider stepping upper stories back from the main facade, or design the lower levels to express the alignment of elements seen traditionally in the block. (See photo, page 52.)
- Also consider stepping the mass of a tall building down to a lower height as it approaches surrounding historic buildings.
- When considering a tall structure, the alignment of building elements is particularly important. Although a new building may be taller than surrounding buildings, the first several stories should visually relate in scale to the surrounding historic context.

Mass, scale and form, continued...
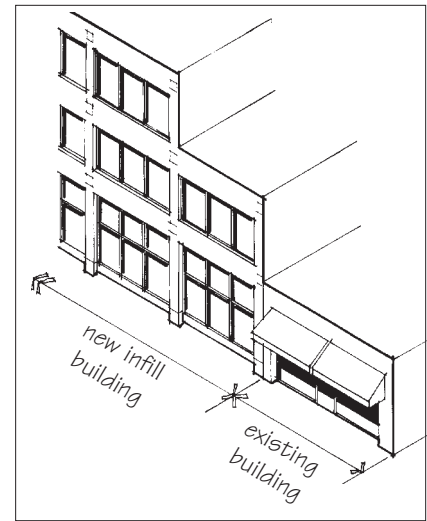
If a structure should be markedly taller than adjacent buildings, consider stepping down the height near the older building to establish a transition in scale.

*Reinforce the established building scale of two to four stories in height.*

In this context, a new building on the right includes a two-story element that aligns with older structures to the left. A central entry is clearly identified. The taller portion of the building is set behind the lower element. This maintains the traditional scale of the street.

Materials should appear similar to those used historically, primarily stone or brick.

Stucco that is detailed to convey a sense of scale and provide visual interest is an appropriate material treatment.

Brick

Stone

Detailed Stucco
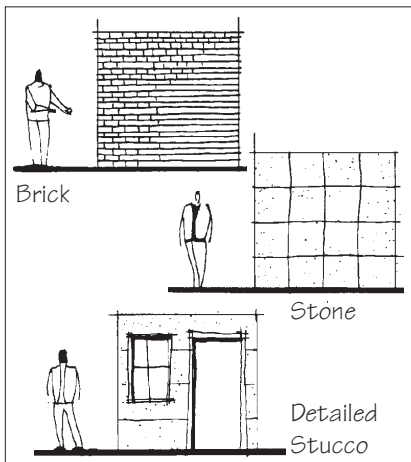
Use building materials that are similar in their dimensions and that can be repeated as traditional modules.

Exterior Building Materials

Traditionally, a limited palette of building materials was used in the Courthouse Area—primarily brick and stone. This same selection of materials should continue to be predominant. New materials also may be considered, however, when they relate to those used historically in scale, texture, matte finish and detailing.

2.9 Materials should appear similar to those used historically.

- Masonry was the traditional material and is preferred for new construction. This includes stone and brick.
- Wood and metal were used for window, door and storefront surrounds and should be continued in new construction.
- New materials will be considered on a case-by-case basis. If used, they should appear similar in character to those used historically. For example, stucco, cast stone and concrete should be detailed to provide a human scale.
- New materials also should have a demonstrated durability in the Lexington climate.

2.10 A simple material finish is encouraged for a large expanse of wall plane.

- A matte, or non-reflective, finish is preferred. Polished stone and mirrored glass, for example, should be avoided as primary materials.

These cast concrete elements convey the scale of traditional masonry facade components, which reinforces the traditional scale of buildings on this street.

Upper-Story Windows

A pattern exists along the streets in the Courthouse Area with the repetition of evenly-spaced, similarly-sized, upper-story windows. These also give a building a sense of human scale—even for high rise towers. Using window sizes and proportions that are familiar to the pedestrian helps them to relate to the overall size of a building. The alignment and similar scale of these upper-story windows are parts of a common way of building that should be continued.

2.11 Upper-story windows with vertical emphasis are encouraged.

- A typical, upper-story window is twice as tall as it is wide. These proportions are within a limited range; therefore, upper-story windows in new construction should relate to the window proportions seen historically.

2.12 Windows should align with others in a block.

- Windows, lintels and their trim elements should align with those on adjacent historic buildings.

Upper-story windows with vertical emphasis are encouraged.

Windows in new construction appear similar in height to those seen traditionally on other buildings nearby and yet are arranged to convey a contemporary character. This approach is encouraged..
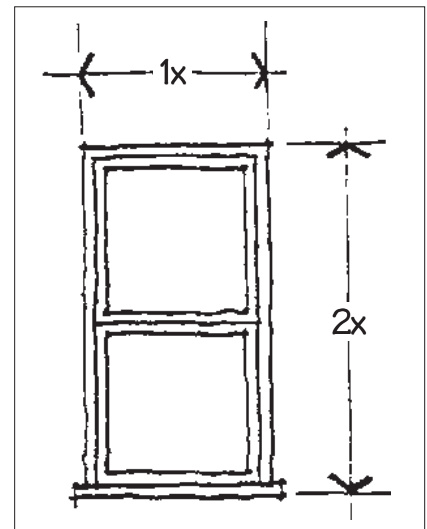
Typically, upper-story windows are twice as tall as they are wide. This tradition should be continued. This may be expressed in a variety of ways. See the example to the left.

Traditional storefront features—such as a kickplate, display window, transom and recessed entry—are reinterpreted in this new storefront design.

This contemporary storefront clearly identifies the primary entrance.

Entries

The repetition of recessed building entries that occurs along the street in the Courthouse Area provides a rhythm of shadows along the street, which helps establish a sense of scale and invites pedestrians to enter buildings in the area. This trend should be continued in new construction.

2.13 Building entrances should appear similar to those used historically.

- Clearly define the primary entrance with a canopy or other architectural or landscape feature.
- A contemporary interpretation of a traditional building entry, which is similar in scale and overall character to those seen historically, is encouraged.

2.14 Locate the primary building entrance to face the street.

- The building entrance should be recessed.
- A primary building entrance also should be at or near street level. A sunken terrace entrance is not appropriate as the primary access from the street.

Clearly define the primary entrance facing the street.

Pedestrian Interest

The Courthouse Area should continue to develop as a pedestrian-oriented environment. Streets, sidewalks and pathways should encourage walking, sitting and other outdoor activities; buildings also should be visually interesting to invite exploration by pedestrians. Existing pedestrian routes should be enhanced. A building should express human scale through materials and forms that were seen traditionally. This is important because buildings are experienced at close proximity by the pedestrian.

2.15 Develop the ground floor level of a project to encourage pedestrian activity.

- Provide at least one of the following along primary pedestrian ways:
  - A storefront
  - Display cases
  - Public art
  - Landscaping
  - Decorative wall surfaces
- Include traditional elements such as display windows, kickplates and transoms on commercial storefronts.
- Avoid a blank wall or vacant lot appearance.

Avoid a blank wall that does not provide visual interest to pedestrians.

When providing a storefront at the street level is not feasible, consider using display cases that illustrate goods and services available inside or nearby.

Include traditional elements such as display windows, kickplates and transoms on commercial storefronts.

Display windows at the library on Main Street provide interest to pedestrians and enliven the street.

Mount an awning to accentuate character-defining features.

Awnings and Canopies

Historically, awnings and canopies were noteworthy features of buildings in the Courthouse Area and their continued use is encouraged.

2.16 A fabric awning is encouraged.
- Operable awnings are encouraged on historic buildings.
- Use colors that are compatible with the overall color scheme of the facade. Solid colors or simple, muted-stripe patterns are appropriate.
- The awning should fit the opening of the building.
- Simple shed shapes are appropriate for rectangular openings.
- Odd shapes, bullnose awnings and bubble awnings are inappropriate on most historic structures.
- Internal illumination of an awning is inappropriate.

2.17 A fixed metal canopy may be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Appropriate supporting mechanisms are wall-mounted brackets, chains and posts.
- A metal canopy is appropriate on a limited range of historic styles, in particular on Art Deco, Moderne and International styles. It also may be considered on a new infill structure.

2.18 On an historic building, mount an awning or canopy to accentuate character-defining features of window openings.
- It should be mounted to highlight moldings that may be found above the storefront and should match the shape of the opening.

Simple shed shapes for awnings are appropriate for rectangular openings.

Canopies may be used to define entries.

Building Lighting

This section addresses building lighting. (See page 69 for street light guidelines.) The character and level of lighting that is used on a building is a special concern. Traditionally, these exterior lights were simple in character and were used to highlight signs, entrances and first floor details. Most fixtures had incandescent lamps that cast a color similar to daylight, were relatively low in intensity and were shielded with simple shade devices. Although new lamp types may be considered, the overall effect of modest, focused building light should be continued.

2.19 Use lighting for the following:
- To accent architectural details.
- To accent building entrances.
- To accent signs.
- To illuminate sidewalks.

2.20 Minimize the visual impacts of site and architectural lighting.
- All exterior light sources should have a low level of luminescence.
- White lights, such as incandescent, that cast a color similar to daylight are preferred.
- Do not wash an entire building facade in light.
- Lighting fixtures should be appropriate to the building and its surroundings in terms of style, scale and intensity of illumination.

2.21 Prevent glare by using shielded and focused light sources.
- Provide shielded and focused light sources that direct light downward.
- Unshielded, high intensity light sources and those that direct light upward should not be permitted.
- Shield lighting associated with service areas, parking lots and parking structures.
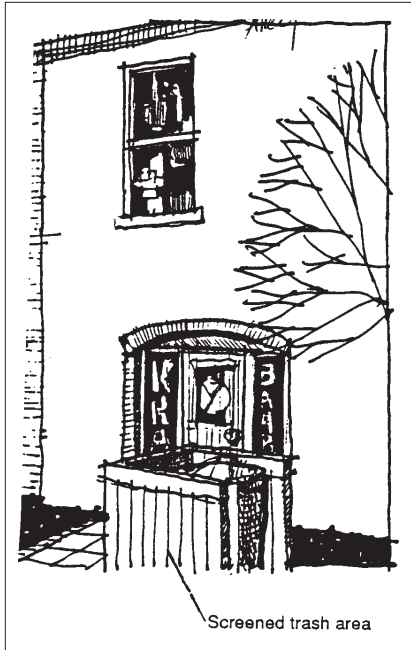
Minimize the visual impacts of trash storage and service areas. Dumpsters should be screened from view.

Mechanical Equipment and Service Utilities

Utility service boxes, telecommunication devices, cables and conduits are among the variety of equipment that may be attached to a building which can affect the character of the area. Trash and recycling storage areas also are concerns. To the greatest extent feasible, these devices should be screened from public view and negative effects on any historic resource should be avoided.

2.22 Minimize the visual impact of mechanical equipment on the public way.
- Screen equipment from view.
- Do not locate window air conditioning units on the building's primary facade.
- Use low-profile mechanical units on rooftops that are not visible from public ways.
- Locate a satellite dish out of public view, to the extent feasible, and in compliance with other regulations.

2.23 Minimize the visual impacts of utility connections and service boxes.
- Locate them on secondary walls, when feasible.

2.24 Locate standpipes and other service equipment such that they will not damage historic facade materials.
- Cutting channels into historic facade materials damages the historic building fabric and is inappropriate.
- Avoid locating such equipment on the front facade.

2.25 Minimize the visual impacts of trash storage and service areas.
- Locate service areas away from major pedestrian routes; typically place them at the rear of a building.
- Dumpsters should be screened from view.

3. Guidelines for Historic Properties

These design guidelines apply to all properties that are considered to be historic resources in the Courthouse Area. Some properties have been identified in historic surveys while many others that may not be officially designated may also have significance. In general, a building must be least fifty years old before it may be evaluated for potential historic significance. Those from the Federal period are widely recognized for their importance, but later styles also merit preservation.

A basic tenet of preservation is to minimize intervention with the historic building fabric and, therefore, in the treatment of an historic building, it is best to preserve those features that remain in good condition. For those features that are deteriorated, repair is preferred, rather than replacement; but when replacement is necessary, it should be done in a manner similar to that seen historically.

Why Preserve Historic Resources?

Historic resources make up a key part of the area's character and represent tangible links to the past. They are assets that attract visitors, shoppers, businesses and residents. This can foster rehabilitation of buildings and support renewed economic activity.

Reusing historic buildings offers these advantages:
- Providing a link with the past
- Establishing a distinct market image
- Quickly making a building available for occupancy
- Providing an attractive image for the area
- Supporting heritage tourism strategies
- Reinforcing the Courthouse Area's ambiance

Across the nation, thousands of communities promote historic preservation because doing so contributes to livability, enhances quality of life, minimizes negative impacts on the environment and yields economic rewards. Many property and business owners are also drawn to historic resources because the quality of construction is typically quite high and the buildings are readily adaptable to contemporary uses.

Historic resources make up a key part of the area's character and represent tangible links to the past.

A preservation project typically has a higher percentage of its total costs devoted to labor and to the purchase of locally-available materials.

Construction Quality

Many of the historic resources in the Courthouse Area are of high quality construction. Although some are deteriorated, most retain sound building systems and high quality materials. By comparison, in today's construction, materials of such quality are rarely available and comparable detailing is very expensive. The high quality of construction in historic buildings is therefore a "value" for many people.

Environmental Benefits

Preserving an historic structure is also a sound environmental conservation policy because "recycling" the structure saves energy and reduces the need for producing new construction materials. Three types of energy savings occur:

- First, energy is not consumed to demolish the existing building and dispose of the resulting debris.
- Second, energy is not used to create new building materials, transport them and assemble them on site.
- Finally, the "embodied" energy, that which was used to create the original building and its components, is preserved.

Economic Benefits

Preservation projects also contribute more to the local economy than do new building programs because each dollar spent on a preservation project has a higher percentage devoted to labor and to the purchase of locally-available materials. By contrast, new construction typically has a higher percentage of each dollar spent devoted to materials that are produced outside of the local economy and to special construction skills that may be imported as well. Therefore, when money is spent on rehabilitating a building, it has a higher "multiplier effect," keeping more money circulating in the local economy.

Character-Defining Features

Character-defining features of historic properties collectively establish a sense of place, provide human scale and add rich detail to the street and should be preserved. Typical features include: original wall materials, decorative cornices, vertically-oriented upper-story windows, larger first-floor openings and trim around openings.

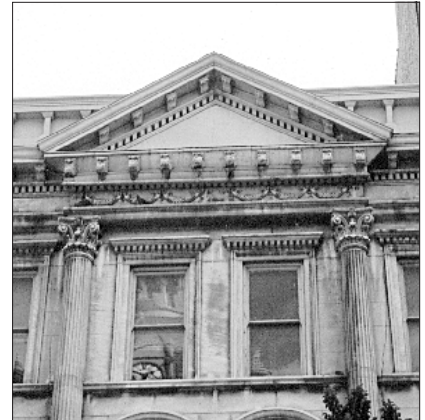### 3.1 Preserve character-defining features that are intact.
- Don't remove or damage character-defining features.
- Preserve intact features with appropriate maintenance techniques.

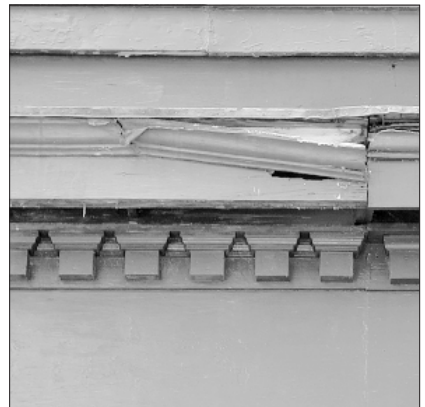### 3.2 Repair those features that are damaged.
- Use methods that will not harm the historic materials. For example, repair work is preferred over replacement.
- When disassembly of an historic element is necessary for its repair, carefully identify how it will be stored during the rehabilitation project. Store it in a safe place until it is to be reinstalled.

3.3 Replace features that are missing or beyond repair.
- Reconstruct only those portions that are beyond repair.
- Reconstruct the original element based on adequate evidence, if possible. This is the preferred option.
- If evidence is missing, a simplified interpretation of similar elements may be considered.

Preserve character-defining features that are intact.

Repair those features that are damaged.
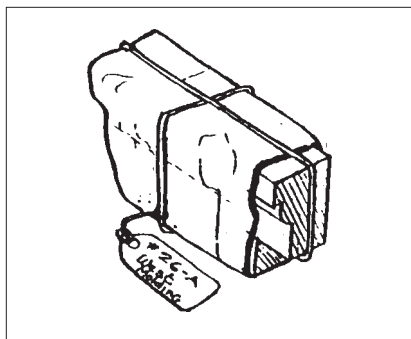
When disassembly of historic elements is necessary for its repair, carefully identify all pieces that will be stored during the rehabilitation project.

Replace features that are missing or beyond repair.

Reconstruct only those portions that are beyond repair.
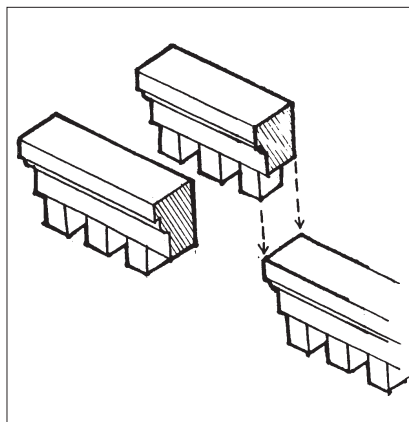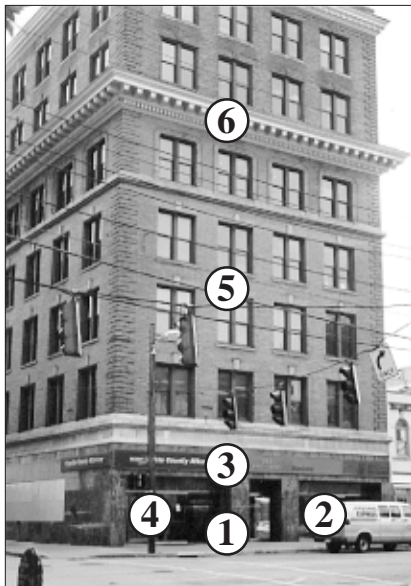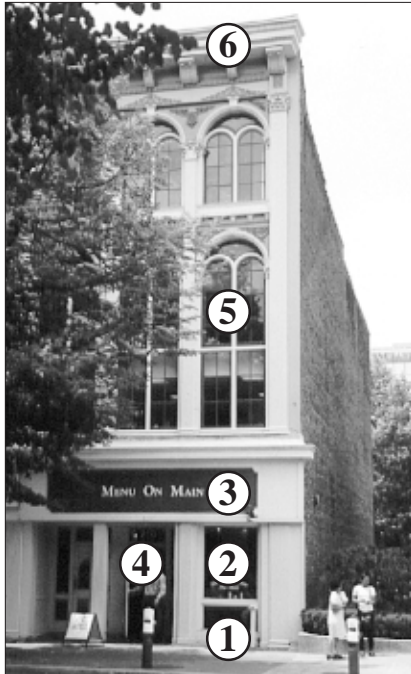
Typical storefront components include: 1) kickplate, 2) display windows, 3) sign band, 4) recessed entry, 5) upper-story windows, and 6) cornice

3.4 For a commercial storefront building, a rehabilitation project should preserve these character-defining elements:

- **Display windows:** The main portion of glass on the storefront, where goods and services are displayed.
- **Transom:** The upper portion of the storefront, separated from the main display window by a frame.
- **Kickplate:** Found beneath the display window. Sometimes called a bulkhead panel.
- **Entry:** Usually set back from the sidewalk in a protected recess.
- **Upper-story windows:** Windows located above the street level. These usually have a vertical orientation, and appear to be less transparent than the large expanse of glass in the storefront below.
- **Cornice molding:** A decorative band at the top of the building. A **midbelt cornice** may sometimes be found separating some floors.
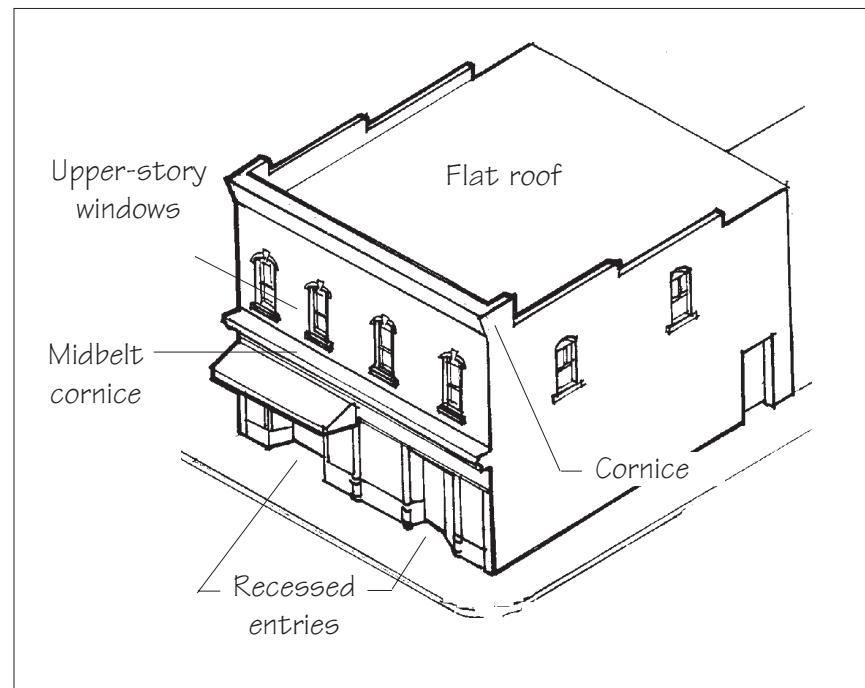
The renovation of a commercial structure should maintain the character-defining elements of the building type.

3.5 For a Federal storefront building type, a rehabilitation project should preserve these character-defining elements:

- **Multi-paned windows:** The **storefront display windows** as well as the **upper-story windows** were both typically small and vertically oriented.
- **Entry:** Sometimes set back from the sidewalk in a protected recess. The door was typically single wide and included a transom or sidelights.
- **Cornice molding:** A decorative band at the top of the building.
- **Dormers:** Used for expanded head room in the uppermost story of a building.
- **Gabled roof:** A sloping roof form with the ridge parallel to the street.
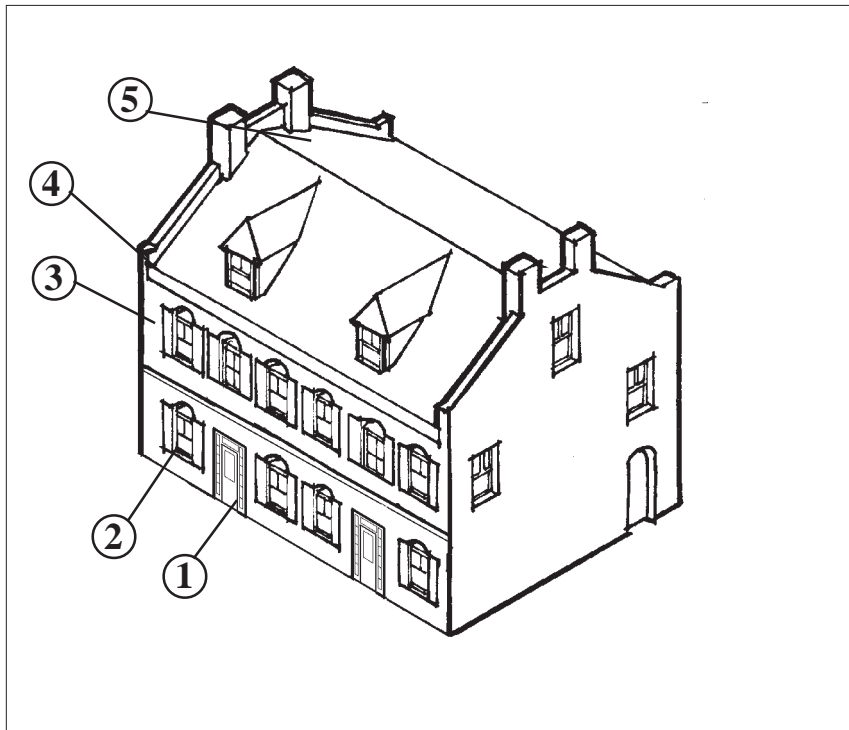
Typical Federal storefront components include: 1) entry, 2) multi-paned display windows, 3) upper-story windows with operable shutters, 4) cornice, and 5) gabled roof.

Design of Alterations

Buildings may undergo alterations over time. New alterations often occur when original material is missing and new interpretations of traditional elements become necessary. These new alterations should be planned to preserve the building's integrity.

See Appendix C for additional technical information resources.

3.6 Design an alteration to be compatible with the historic character of the property.

- Avoid alterations that would hinder the ability to interpret the historic significance of the original building.
- Alterations that seek to imply an earlier period than that of the building are inappropriate. For example, don't apply "Colonial" details to an 1890s building.

3.7 Avoid alterations that damage historic features.

- For example, mounting a sign panel in a manner that causes decorative moldings to be damaged would be inappropriate.

This row of buildings had lost some details over time and a monochromatic color scheme obscures the original design character. Overhead garage doors that had replaced original storefronts were later alterations without historic significance. (Compare with the "after" photograph below.)

After rehabilitation, the row of buildings shown in the photograph above conveys a stronger sense of its historic character. Note that some old uses were retained, while other new uses were also introduced. Some non-contributing alterations were removed and storefronts were reconstructed. One was retained, but was painted to minimize impacts.

Design of Alterations, continued...

The windows in this structure were boarded and architectural details needed repair. (Compare with the photo below.)

A modest building can also be renovated to be compatible with the context. In this photograph the original millinery shop front had simple moldings at the top. (Compare with the photos below.)

Storefront windows were reopened and upper-story windows were repaired.

Years later, all original detail had been stripped from the building. (Compare with the photos above and below.)

The same building (above) after renovation exhibits the more classical features of commercial storefronts, including a painted cornice, kickplate and recessed entry.

If a storefront is altered, consider restoring it to the original design. (Compare with the two photos of the same building below.)

Using historic photographs can help in determining the original character. (Compare with below.)

This rehabilitation preserves surviving details and reconstructs missing ones.

Storefronts

Many downtown storefronts have components seen traditionally on commercial buildings. The repetition of these standard elements creates a visual unity on the street that should be preserved. See page 42 for definitions.

Although these elements are common among buildings, many of the elements relate to the period of construction and style of architecture of the building and are thus presented differently. If the storefront elements are defining of their architectural style or period of construction, they should be preserved.

Where original details are missing, an alternative design that is a contemporary interpretation of a traditional storefront, as this one is, may be considered. The storefront still should be designed to provide interest to pedestrians.

However, on some buildings the specific design of individual store-front elements was not integral to the architectural style of the build-ing. For example, in some styles, the position of the entryway is important to the design of the building, whereas in others it is not and its location moved around due to function. When this is the case and a feature (e.g., the location of the door) is not integral to the style of the building, it can be altered (e.g., the entryway can be moved or stairs to upstairs can be added.)

The repetition of the standard storefront elements creates a visual unity on the street that should be preserved. When planning for the rehabilitation of a storefront, an evaluation of the building's historic integrity should be made. Researching archival materials such as historic photos and building plans can be helpful in understanding the role of the storefront and its relationship to the building style and the street wall. An analysis of the existing building for any clues to the location of glass, window supports and transoms can also provide clues to a missing or altered storefront feature. Preserving significant historic storefronts or restoring an altered or missing store-front element are important preservation goals.

3.8 Preserve the historic character of a storefront when it is intact.
- This will help maintain the interest of the street to pedestrians.
- If the storefront glass is intact, it should be preserved.

3.9 If a storefront is altered, consider restoring it to the original design.
- If evidence of the original design is missing, use a simplified interpretation of similar storefronts. The storefront still should be designed to provide interest to pedestrians.

Retain the original shape of the transom glass in an historic storefront.
Removing or covering up the transom opening is inappropriate.

If an historically significant storefront opening has been altered, consider restoring it if the original condition can be determined. In this case, openings have been blocked down for smaller replacement windows. Returning to the original proportions is preferred.

Preserve historic upper-story windows.

Where and entry is not recessed, maintain it in its original position, when feasible.

3.10 An alternative design that is a contemporary interpretation of a traditional storefront is appropriate.

- Where the original is missing and no evidence of its character exists, a new design that uses the traditional elements may be considered.
- However, it must continue to convey the characteristics of typical storefronts, including the transparent character of the display windows, recessed entries and cornices, to name a few.
- Altering the size of an historic window opening or blocking it with opaque materials is inappropriate.
- Note that in some cases an original storefront may have been altered early in the history of the building and the alterations have taken on significance. Such changes should be preserved.

Windows and Doors

Original windows and doors are important features that help convey the early character of a building. These elements should be preserved, when feasible.

3.11 Maintain an historically significant storefront opening.

- The size and shape of the storefront are important characteristics that contribute to the integrity of an historic commercial building. Avoid altering the shapes of these features.
- If these elements have already been altered, consider restoring them if their original condition can be determined.

3.12 Retain the original shape of the transom glass in an historic storefront.

- The upper glass band of a traditional storefront introduced light into the depths of a building. These bands are found on many historic storefronts, and they often align at the same height. The shape of the transom is important to the proportion of the storefront, and it should be preserved in its historic configuration, whenever possible.
- If the original glass is missing, install new glass. However, if the transom must be blocked, use it as a sign panel or a decorative band, but be certain to retain the original proportions.

3.13 Preserve historic upper-story windows.

- Historically, upper-story windows had a vertical emphasis. The proportions of these windows contribute to the character of each commercial storefront. Don't block them down or alter their size.
- Consider reopening windows that are currently blocked.
- Maintain the historic sash as well. Repair sash, rather than replace it, when feasible.

Entries

The repetition of recessed entries provides a rhythm of shadows along the street that helps establish a sense of scale and identifies business entrances. This pattern should be maintained.

3.14 Maintain recessed entries where they are found.
- Restore the historic recessed entry if it has been altered.
- Avoid positioning an entry flush with the sidewalk.

3.15 Where an entry is not recessed, maintain it in its original position, when feasible.
- However, it may be necessary to comply with other code requirements, including door width, swing and construction. If so, an alteration may be considered.
- In some cases, entries must comply with accessibility requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Note, however, that some flexibility in application of these regulations is provided for historic properties.

Kickplates

A kickplate, or bulkhead, was a popular feature of most commercial buildings. This feature should be preserved.
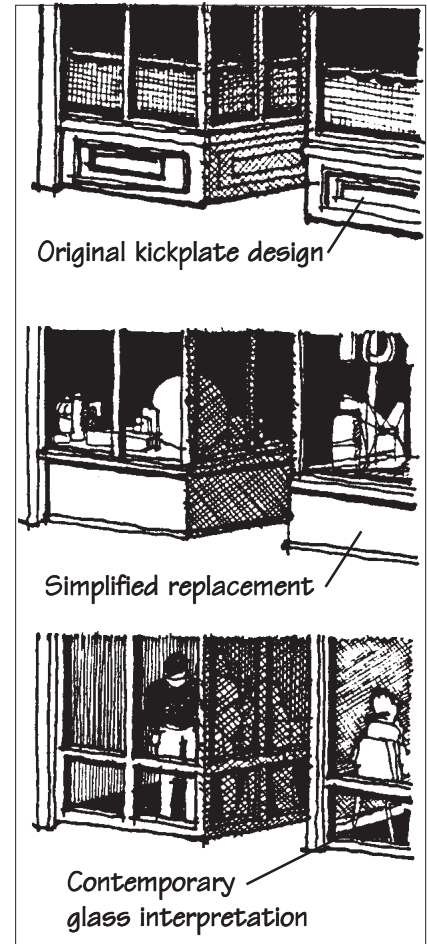
3.16 Retain an original kickplate as a decorative panel.
- The kickplate, located below the display window, adds interesting detail to the streetscape and should be preserved.

3.17 If the original kickplate is missing, develop a sympathetic replacement design.
- Wood, metal and masonry are appropriate materials for replacements.
- Coordinate the color of the kickplate with other trim elements on the building.

Original kickplate design

Simplified replacement

Contemporary glass interpretation

Retain the kickplate as a decorative panel. If the original is missing, develop a compatible replacement design.

If the original kickplate is missing, develop a sympathetic replacement design. Here a transparent glass kickplate is used where a solid panel may have existed. However, the original proportions are still conveyed, which is appropriate.

Maintain recessed entries where they are found. The repetition of recessed entries provides a rhythm of shadows along the street that helps establish a sense of scale and identifies business entrances.

If the cornice is missing from a building, consider reconstructing it. (See below.)

Reconstruct a missing cornice when historic evidence is available.

A simplified interpretation also is appropriate if evidence of the original is missing.

Preserve the character of the cornice line with a replacement design.

Cornices

Most historic commercial buildings have cornices to cap their facades. Their repetition and general alignment along a street contribute to the visual continuity on a block and should be preserved.

3.18 Preserve the character of the cornice line of an historic building.
- This may be a straight or stepped parapet.

3.19 Reconstruct a missing cornice, when historic evidence is available.
- Use early photographs to determine design details of an original cornice.
- The substitution of another old cornice for the original may be considered, provided that the substitute is similar in appearance to the original.

3.20 A simplified interpretation also is appropriate if evidence of the original is missing.
- Appropriate materials include stone, brick and stamped metal. Concrete and resin cast products may also be used.

Reconstructing missing details, when sufficient information is available, is encouraged. In this case, the original cornice is missing in the photo at upper left. The central portion of the pediment is under construction, above. When completed, in the photo at lower left, the shadow lines from the cornice once again add interest to the building front.

Facade Materials

Original exterior building materials provide a sense of scale and texture and often convey the work of skilled craftsmen. These original building materials should not be covered, damaged or removed.

3.21 Historic building materials and craftsmanship add textural qualities, as well as visual continuity and character to the streetscape, and should be preserved.
*   Brick and stone are the dominant building materials and their character and finish should be preserved.

3.22 Protect historic material surfaces.
*   Don't use harsh cleaning methods, such as sandblasting, that could damage the finish of historic materials.
*   If chemical cleaners are used, a test patch should be reviewed.
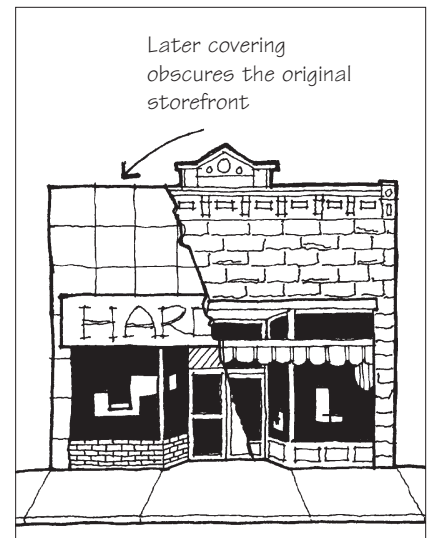
3.23 Protect masonry from water deterioration.
*   Provide proper drainage so water does not stand on flat surfaces or accumulate in decorative features.
*   Provide a means to drain water away from foundations to minimize rising damp. Do not permit downspouts to direct water to the foundation.
*   DO NOT use a sealant, or clear coat, to protect masonry. A sealant will prevent proper breathing and cause moisture to be trapped inside the masonry.
*   However, if masonry was painted historically, then it may be appropriate to repaint.

3.24 Don't cover or obscure original facade materials.
*   Covering original facades not only conceals interesting detail, but also interrupts the visual continuity along the street.
*   If the original material has been covered, expose it if feasible.

3.25 If material replacement is necessary, use materials similar to those employed historically.
*   Brick and stone were the primary wall materials for most buildings. Wood and metal were used for window, door and storefront surrounds.
*   Substitute materials may be used if they match the original in appearance.

Later covering obscures the original storefront

Don't cover or obscure original facade materials.

If the original material has been covered, uncover it if feasible.

Protect masonry from water deterioration.

When a rooftop addition is set back from the front, the original scale of the building can be perceived.

Design of Additions

Many buildings have experienced additions over time, as the need for more space occurred. An addition should be designed such that the historic character of the building can still be perceived. When planning a new addition to an historic structure, the negative effects that may occur should be minimized. While some destruction of original materials is almost always a part of constructing an addition, such loss should be minimized.

Three distinct types of additions should be considered. First, a ground-level addition that involves expanding the footprint of a structure may be considered. Such an addition should be to the rear or side of a building. This will have the least impact on the historic character of a building, but there may only be limited opportunities to do this.

Second, an addition to the roof may be designed that is simple in character and set back substantially from the front of a building. In addition, the materials, window sizes and alignment of trim elements on the addition should be compatible to those of the existing structure.

A third option, which only will be considered on a case-by-case basis, is to design an addition within the wall plane of the existing building. This option is the most difficult and requires the most care to respect the historic relationship of the building to the street. Such an addition should provide a visual distinction between the existing structure and its addition. This may be accomplished through the use of a midbelt cornice element or a subtle change in building materials.

An addition may be set back to preserve the perception of the historic scale of the building. In the image on the left, the original three floors of this building are visible. In the angle view at right, two newer floor are visible. Note how in this building the addition cannot be seen when looking at the building straight-on.

3.26 An addition should be compatible in scale, materials and character with the main building.

3.27 An addition should not damage or obscure historically or architecturally important features.
- For example, loss or alteration of a cornice line should be avoided.

3.28 Design an addition such that the historic character of the original building can still be interpreted.
- A new addition that creates an appearance inconsistent with the historic character of the building is inappropriate. For example, an addition that is more ornate than the original building would be out of character.
- An addition that seeks to imply an earlier period than that of the building also is inappropriate because it would confuse the history of the building.

3.29 An addition should be subtly distinguishable from the historic building.
- An addition should be made distinguishable from the historic building, even in subtle ways, so that the character of the original can be interpreted.

3.30 An addition may be made to the rear or side of a building if it does the following:
- An addition should maintain the alignment of storefront elements, moldings, cornices and upper-story windows that exist on the main part of the building and its surrounding context.

Design of additions, continued...
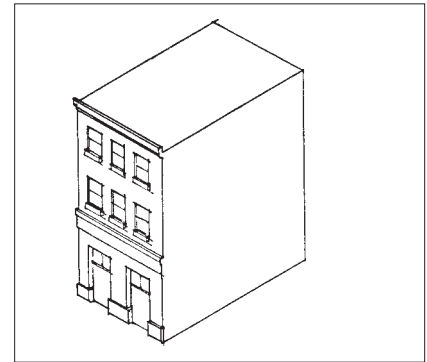
An original three-story building, before an addition. (Compare with sketches below and on the following page.)

New addition to the side

New addition to the rear

Appropriate alternative approaches to additions.

Roof addition set back from the front

Roof addition in the same plane as the original, but differentiated with details
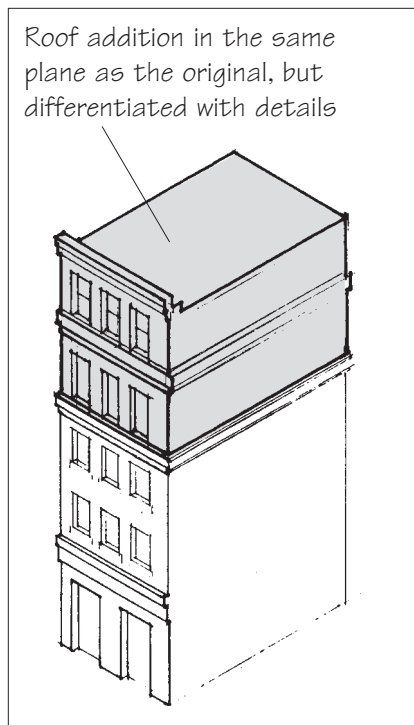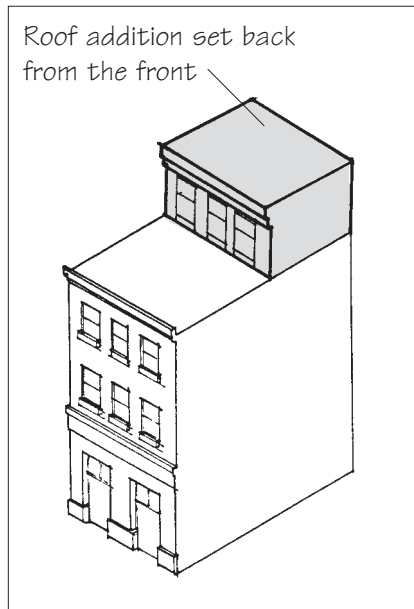
Appropriate alternative approaches to additions.

3.31 An addition may be made to the roof of a building if it does the following:

- An addition should be set back from the primary, character-defining facade, to preserve the perception of the historic scale of the building.
- Its design should be modest in character, so it will not attract attention from the historic facade.
- The addition should be distinguishable as new, albeit in a subtle way.

3.32 In limited circumstances, an addition may be made to the roof of a building and not be set back from character-defining facades, if it does the following:

- An addition should be distinguished from the existing building. A change in material or a decorative band can be considered to accomplish this.
- An addition should maintain the alignment of storefront elements, moldings, cornices and upper-story windows that exist on the main part of the building.
- The addition should also be compatible in scale, texture and materials with the original.

Precedent for constructing an addition in line with the original building walls exists in the Courthouse Area: the McClelland Building, which stands on the northeast corner of Short and Upper streets, was built in 1900 as a five-story building, with the two additional stories being added circa 1904.

4. Parking Facilities

The Courthouse Area first developed without the automobile and its streets were designed for pedestrians and horse-drawn conveyances. Cars did appear early in the twentieth century, however, and they have continued to have a major presence. Even so, their visual impacts should be minimized. New parking facilities should be designed to be attractive, compatible additions to the historic area. Using high quality materials, including a sense of scale in architectural details, and providing active uses at the sidewalk edge are some methods that can mitigate potentially negative impacts of new parking facilities. In general, a new parking facility should remain subordinate to the street scene.

Location of Parking Facilities

4.1   Locate a parking facility, particularly a surface lot, in the interior of a block, whenever possible.
*   This acknowledges the special function of corner properties as they are generally more visible than interior lots, serve as landmarks and provide a sense of enclosure to an intersection.

4.2   Site a parking lot so it will minimize gaps in the continuous building wall of a block.
*   Where a parking lot shares a site with a building, place the parking to the rear or side of the building.
*   In this way, the architectural continuity of the street can be preserved.
*   Avoid multiple curb cuts. These complicate turning movements and disrupt the sidewalk.

> For more detailed information regarding parking requirements, see the Zoning Ordinance for the Lexington-Fayette Urban County, Kentucky, Article 16-1: General Regulations for Parking and Loading Areas.

Where a parking lot shares a site with a building, place the parking at the rear of the site or beside the building and screen it.
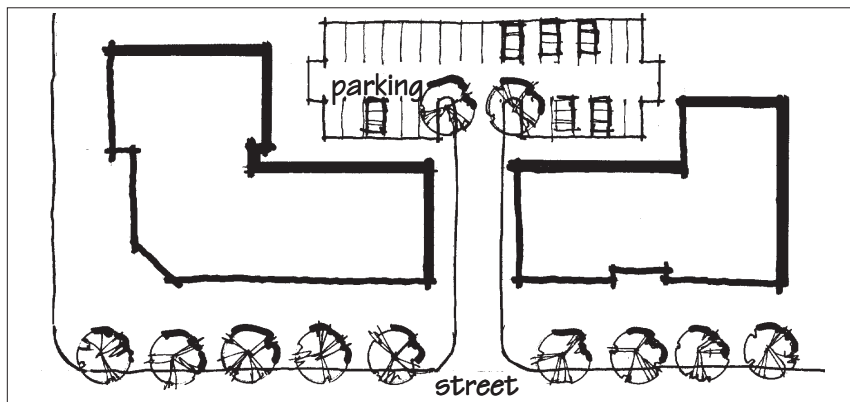
Locate a parking facility, particularly surface parking lots, at the interior of a block whenever possible.
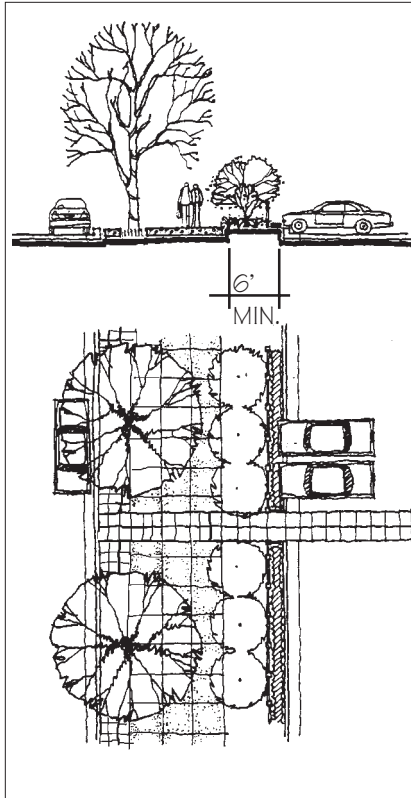
Where a parking lot abuts a public sidewalk, provide a buffer.

Visual Impacts of Surface Parking

4.3 Where a parking lot abuts a public sidewalk, provide a visual buffer.

- This may be a landscaped strip or planter that is a minimum of six feet in depth.
- Consider the use of a wall as a screen for the edge of the lot. Materials should be compatible with those of nearby buildings.
- Note that for a parking area used by five or more vehicles, it must be landscaped and screened, according to Article 18: Landscape and Land Use Buffers, of the Zoning Ordinance for the Lexington-Fayette Urban County, Kentucky.
- Use a combination of trees and shrubs to create a landscape buffer.

Consider the use of walls as screens for the edges of lots. Materials should be compatible with those of nearby historic buildings.

Consider the use of fences and walls as screens for the edges of lots.

Where a parking lot abuts a public sidewalk, provide a landscape buffer. This one includes ground covers and a fence.

Use a combination of trees and shrubs to create a landscape buffer.

4.4 To reduce the visual impacts of a large parking lot area, divide it into a number of smaller parking parcels and separate them with landscaping.

- Plant shrubs and small trees, at least four feet in height, to define circulation routes for pedestrians and vehicles.
- Divide parking lots into smaller areas with planted buffers between them to minimize the perceived scale of the total field of stalls.

Plant shrubs and small trees, at least four feet in height, to define circulation routes for pedestrians and vehicles.

Visual impacts of surface parking, continued...

Intermediate tree plantings between islands

Tree grate
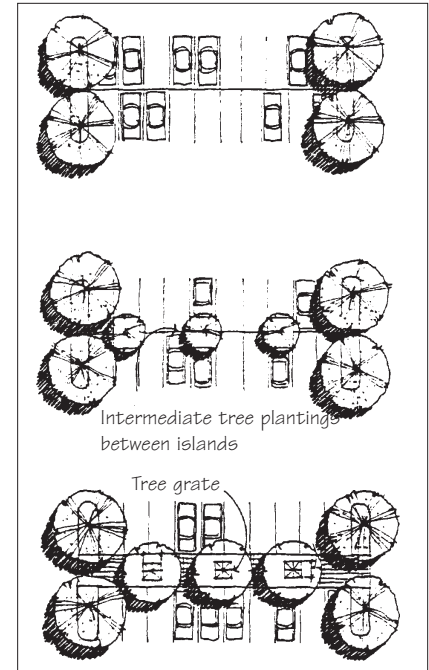
Minimize the negative visual impact of cars parked on site. Divide parking lots into smaller areas with planted buffers between them.
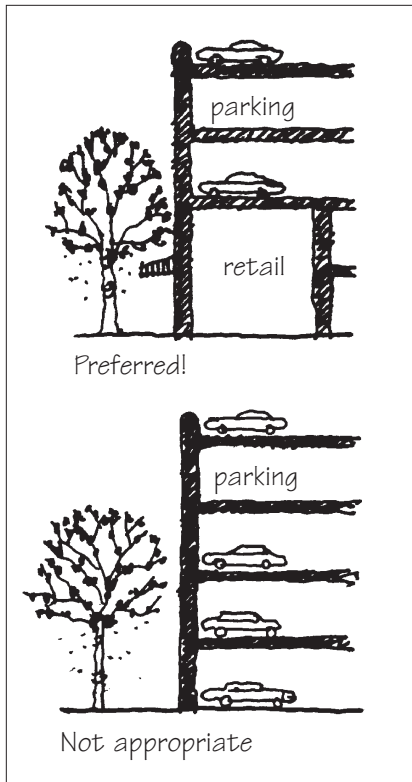
The ground level of a parking structure should be wrapped by retail space, offices or some other active use along the street edge, when feasible.

This parking structure incorporates a wrap of retail stores along the street edge. The storefronts are contemporary interpretations of the historic downtown context.

Visual Impacts of Parking Structures

Parking structures should be designed to enhance the activity of the streetscape in the Courthouse Area. At a minimum a parking structure should help to animate the street and be compatible with the surrounding historic context. The visual impacts of the cars themselves should be minimized. *(Note that these guidelines apply in addition to the General Design Guidelines for the design of an infill building.)*

**4.5   Design a parking structure so that it creates a visually attractive and active street edge.**
- When feasible, a parking structure in the area should be wrapped with retail or another active use along the street edge, to shield the facility from the street and add activity to the street.
- Other methods of accomplishing this include, but are not limited to:
  - Retail/commercial wrap
  - Murals or public art
  - Landscaping
  - Product display cases

Design a parking structure so that it creates a visually attractive and active pedestrian environment. This parking structure is screened with a two-story "wrap" of retail space.

4.6 A parking structure should be compatible with traditional buildings in the surrounding area.

- Respect the regular window pattern and other architectural elements of adjacent historic buildings.
- Maintain the alignments and rhythms of architectural elements, as seen along the street.
- Continue the use of similar building materials.
- Avoid multiple curb cuts. These complicate turning movements and disrupt the sidewalk.
- Express the traditional widths of buildings in the area.

A part of this infill building is a parking structure that is set back from the front and sides of a retail wrap. The openings in the parking section reflect window proportions similar to those seen historically in the area.

Visual impacts of parking facilities, continued...

A parking structure should be designed to be compatible with traditional buildings in the surrounding area. This garage fails to do so.

Narrow curb cuts, such as this, can provide access to internal parking facilities while minimizing crossing conflicts with pedestrians.

Security and Pedestrian Circulation in Parking Facilities

4.7 Design a parking facility so that pedestrian access is easy and clearly defined.

- Walkways should be clearly defined with graphics, lighting or landscaping.
- Providing a direct connection between a parking structure and its supporting businesses is desirable.
- Interior and exterior lighting should be planned to assure user safety.

Precedent exists in the area for providing vehicular access that presents less of a conflict with pedestrian movements. The narrow passage in this Federal block of buildings is an example.

5. Public Streetscapes & Open Spaces

Lexington has the opportunity to reinforce downtown as a distinct pedestrian precinct, one in which people walking share downtown with buses, automobiles and bicycles. This mix of traffic can provide a sense of excitement and can actually enhance the pedestrian experience if these other elements are kept in balance. Paramount, however, should be providing a sense of comfort for pedestrians. This includes ensuring that the sidewalks are designed to facilitate walking and that public spaces are created which are lively and inviting. This section includes guidelines for sidewalk and open space design for the Courthouse Area that will help to achieve this objective.

Design Concept for the Public Streetscape

The *Lexington Downtown Streetscape Master Plan* (1996) calls for installation of new street furniture, including benches, planters and waste receptacles, as well as new street lights along portions of Main Street. In conjunction with these improvements, reconstruction of some sidewalks is also anticipated. The scheme includes use of decorative paving for sidewalks and incorporates metal benches and waste receptacles. Cast planters are also employed. The streetscape plan also establishes some basic principles for street furnishings. The design guidelines presented in this section draw upon the basic design concepts established in this plan and further provide directions for how these furnishings may most effectively be placed in the streetscape.

Fundamentally, streetscape designs for downtown, and for the Courthouse Area specifically, should help to establish a sense of visual continuity while still expressing unique qualities of the region. This means that a consistent set of street furniture elements should be used whenever feasible and that open spaces should be designed to convey a sense of visual relatedness while also facilitating individual designs that will add accent to the urban setting.

With respect to street furniture styles, the designs should not appear frozen in time, but instead should express an image of Lexington as it is today while also being respectful of its heritage. For example, street lights need not match those found historically in the area, but they should be compatible with and reinforce the context of the surviving historic buildings.

> For additional details about the streetscape design, see:
> *Lexington Downtown Streetscape Master Plan*, June 1996.

Sidewalks vary in construction and quality in the area.

Sidewalk Design

Sidewalks vary in construction and quality in the area. While many sidewalks in downtown are concrete, those along portions of Main Street are brick. This paving was installed in the early 1970s as part of an enhancement program for the area. Ramps have been installed at most corners to facilitate access. Portions of sidewalks have eroded over time and may require replacement. When reconstruction of sidewalks does occur, it should help to establish a sense of visual continuity for the area and to enhance the walking experience.

Existing sidewalk

Decorative street light

Cluster of street furniture

Expanded sidewalk, or plaza, at corner

Curb ramp

Building wall
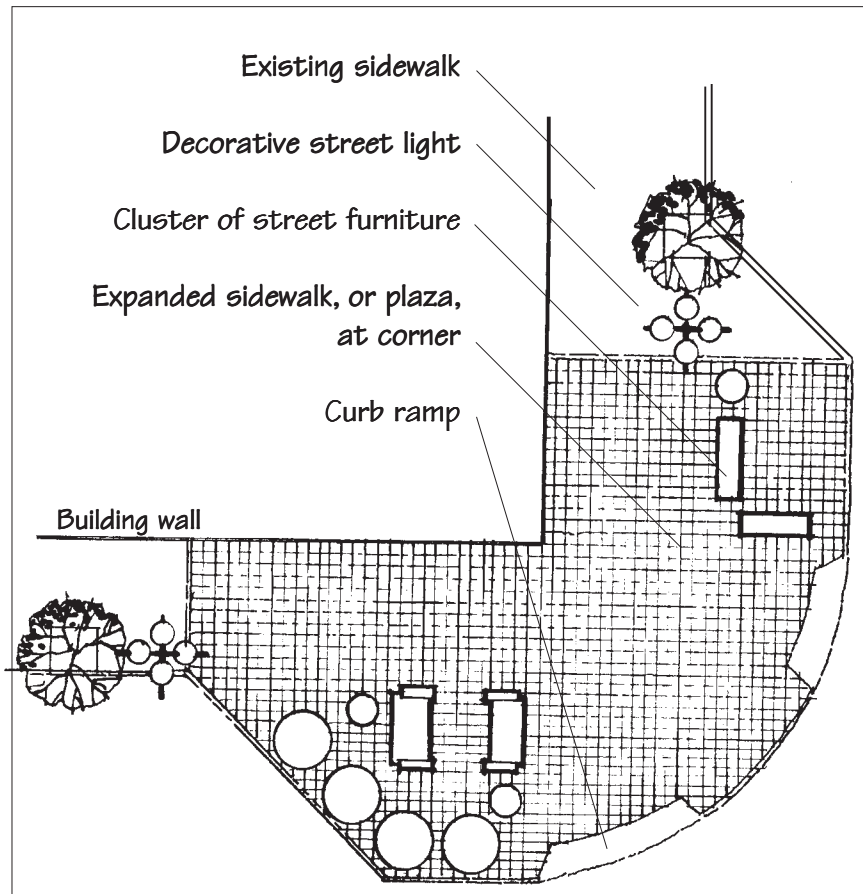
Provide expanded sidewalk areas, or "plazas," where conditions permit doing so.

Decorative Paving

5.1   Use a consistent decorative paving design to convey a sense of visual continuity.

- Decorative paving should be used to denote distinct activity zones, such as intersections, pedestrian crossings and building entrances, and to define places for sitting and other outdoor activities.

5.2   Brick pavers should be incorporated in all sidewalks.

- The extent of brick to be used should comply with the hierarchy specified in the *Lexington Downtown Streetscape Master Plan* (1996). Some sidewalks have a simple accent edge while others have more extensive amounts of brick to define special activity areas.
- A basic sidewalk design may include a brick accent strip along the curb and the balance may be broom-finished concrete.
- Brick paving may also be used to identify building entrances and special activity areas.
- Sidewalks with a greater intensity of use should have a higher percentage of brick paving. This may be a scored and colored concrete or high density, modular pavers.

Brick pavers should be incorporated in all sidewalks.
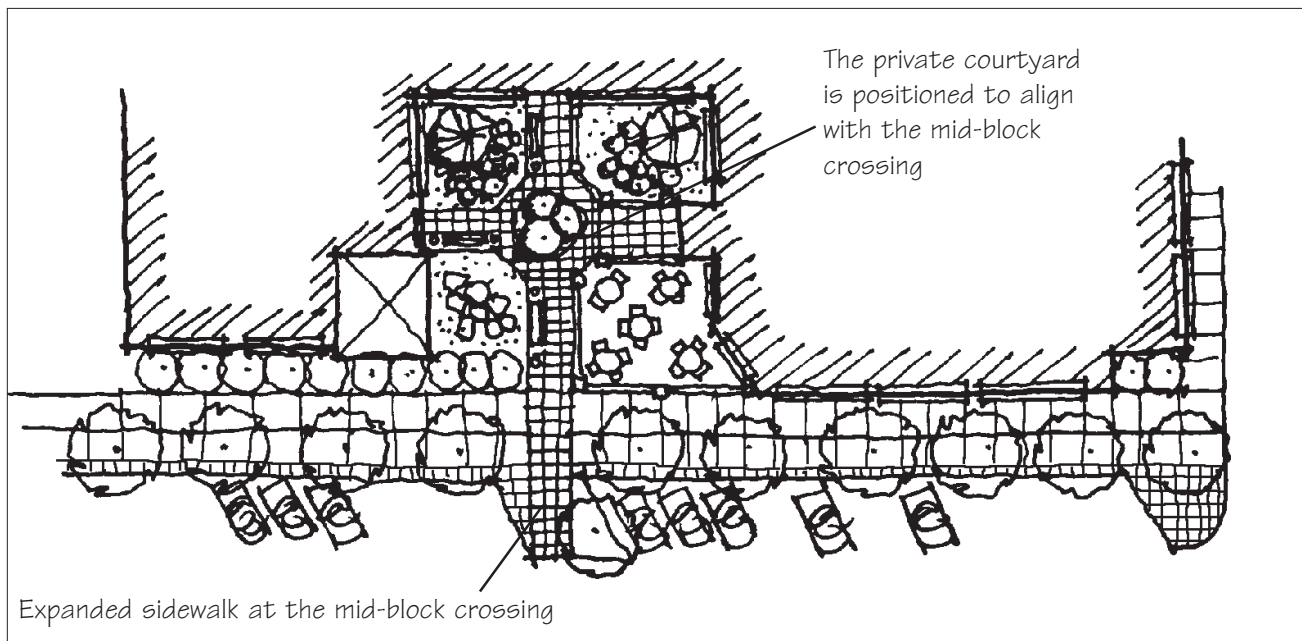
The private courtyard is positioned to align with the mid-block crossing

Expanded sidewalk at the mid-block crossing

Coordinate private open space development with that of the streetscape design of public sidewalks, when conditions permit.

Sidewalk design, continued...

Sidewalk Plazas

5.3   Provide expanded sidewalk areas, or "plazas," where conditions permit.

- Where appropriate, work within existing extended rights-of-way or consider expansions to existing sidewalks at strategic locations. For example, locating an expanded plaza at the entry to a theater would accommodate gatherings of patrons.
- In addition, creating a "neck-down" at an intersection or mid-block crossing is appropriate.
- These expanded areas also provide space for clustering street furniture.

5.4   Coordinate private open space development with that of the streetscape design of public sidewalks, when conditions permit.

- For example, combine a private courtyard with an expanded sidewalk plaza to maximize the visual impacts of these spaces.

Building entries open onto courtyard to provide activity

Public sidewalk

Paving design changes at traditional storefront line to define the building wall

Planters and benches also help define the building wall line

Courtyard within property line
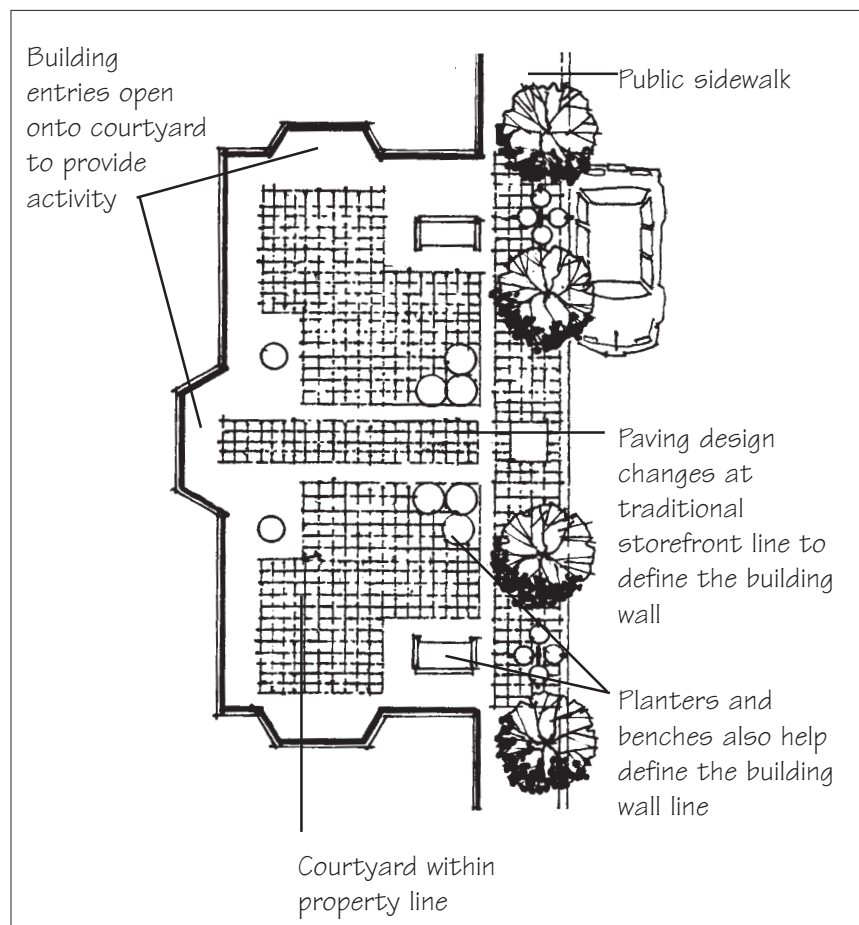
Frame public open space activities that will be in use year round and define the edges of the open space along the sidewalk.

Public Open Space

Opportunities exist to create outdoor places for people within properties, in addition to "plazas" that may be developed in expanded areas of the sidewalks. These spaces may include gardens and courtyards as part of building entries and they may also include more formal, public open spaces. In all cases, these should be designed to maximize the potential for their active use and to enhance the traditional character of the area.

Cheapside circa 1890.

5.5   Open spaces should read as "accents" in the street wall of building fronts.
* In general, the majority of the edge of a block should consist of building walls. Gaps in the street wall that occur as open space should be planned to be subordinate to the definition of the street edge with buildings.
* In general, at least 50% of a building wall should be set at the sidewalk edge. Therefore, no more than 50% of the frontage of a property should be open space.

Union Station circa 1930s.

5.6   Define the edges of the open space along the sidewalk.
* Use changes in paving, hedges and walls to define the street edge.

5.7   Frame public open space activities that will be in use year round.
* Locate open space such that pedestrian circulation routes to major buildings cross it in order to help to animate the space.
* Orient major entrances onto the open space and design circulation routes to facilitate movement through it.

5.8   Site open space to maximize opportunities for sun and shade.
* Provide shade for summer months and sun in the winter, when feasible.

Street Furniture

Several areas of the downtown already have amenities in place that enhance the pedestrian experience. Additional furnishings should be considered to enhance the area, but should work with the existing features and the hierarchy of streetscape improvements proposed in the *Lexington Downtown Streetscape Master Plan* (1996). As feasible, street furnishings, such as benches, planters, lighting, newspaper racks and waste receptacles, should be located only in a "furnishings zone," which maintains a clearly defined pedestrian travel lane.

5.9 All street furniture in the public right-of-way should have similar materials and colors.
- When feasible, street furniture should express local character in terms of materials and design.
- Individual furnishings should be of designs such that they may be combined with other street furniture in a coherent composition.

Street Furniture Arrangement

5.10 Street furniture should be located in areas of high pedestrian activity.
- Locate furniture at pedestrian route intersections and major building entrances and near outdoor gathering places.

5.11 Street furnishings should be clustered in "groupings," when feasible.
- Use planters and waste receptacles to frame spaces for benches, for example.

Seating

5.12 Public seating should be provided to enhance the pedestrian experience.
- Install benches in high pedestrian traffic areas and/or areas of interest.
- The design of the bench should be consistent with other furnishings.

5.13 Position a bench to provide a sense of comfort.
- Buffer the bench from traffic; for example, position a planter between the bench and the curb.
- Avoid locating a bench close to the curb.

Waste receptacles

5.14 Cluster waste receptacles with other furnishings.
- The design of the receptacles should be compatible with other existing furnishings.

Planters

5.15 When feasible, cluster planters with other furnishings.
- The design of the planters should be compatible with other furnishings.
- Install freestanding planters at seating areas, along edges with parking lots, in pedestrian plazas and in clustered furnishing areas.
- A grouping of three to five planters is recommended.

Landscaping and Planting

Located in the heart of the Bluegrass region, downtown Lexington has a rich array of landscape materials, most of it indigenous to the area. Consistent with the standards established in the *Lexington Downtown Streetscape Master Plan* (1996), a harmonious streetscape palette of plant material should be employed.

5.16 Use indigenous plant materials when feasible.

- Locate street trees along edges of sidewalks, maintaining a clearly defined pedestrian travel zone.
- Locate street trees in larger planting areas, such as buffer strips adjacent to parking lots and/or pocket parks.
- Provide underground irrigation systems.
- Use flowers to provide seasonal colors.
- No planting, with the exception of ground cover, espalier plants and hedges, shall be placed closer than two feet to pavement or structures.

5.17 Trees installed in the sidewalks shall have tree wells that reflect the intensity of pedestrian traffic.

- Lower-level use areas shall have ground cover or loosely laid bricks.
- Higher intensity use areas shall have cast metal tree grates.
- The grates shall be of a matching design, as specified in the *Streetscape Master Plan, 12/99.*
- A tree well should be a minimum of 40 square feet in area.

5.18 Install new street trees to enhance the pedestrian experience.

- Install new trees where walkway widths permit.
- Spacing of new street trees should average 35 feet.
- Replace trees that are diseased or have past their life cycle.

5.19 Street tree species should be consistent along designated streets.

- Tree species should comply with those specified in the *Lexington Downtown Streetscape Master Plan* (1996).

5.20 Provide electrical service for string lights in trees.

Street Lights

Street lighting should also reinforce the visual continuity of downtown. The light fixtures (luminaires) and poles (standards) should be unifying design elements that promote visual interest and variety.

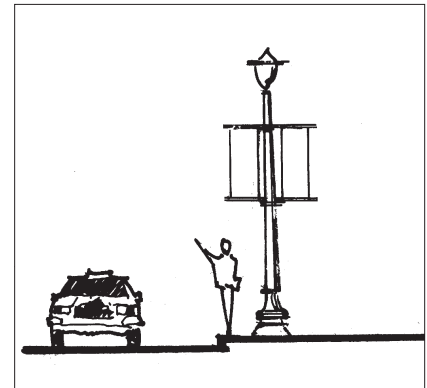### 5.21 Light pole designs should be decorative and complement other street furniture.
- The color of the pole should match that of other key street furnishings, including benches and waste receptacles.
- A style that reflects the history of the street may be considered; however, a contemporary design that is compatible with the historic buildings in the context also is appropriate.
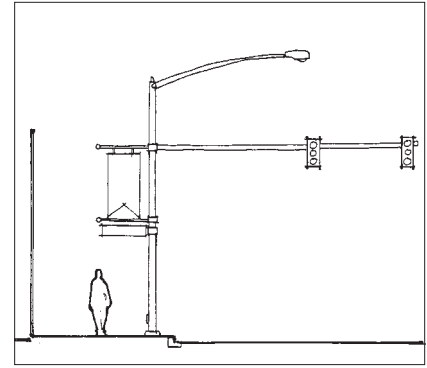
5.22 The light pole, or standard, should be designed to accommodate special decorative accessories.
- Mounts for hanging planter baskets and banners, for example, should be included.
- Mounts for seasonal lighting schemes also should be considered.

5.23 Streets lights in mid-block locations should convey a pedestrian-oriented scale.
- Lighting along the right-of-way should be a combination of pedestrian-scaled street lights and spillover from lights on adjacent buildings. Lighting in this location should be designed to be comfortable to pedestrians.
- A lamp that conveys the color spectrum similar to daylight is preferred. For example, metal halide and color-corrected sodium are appropriate.

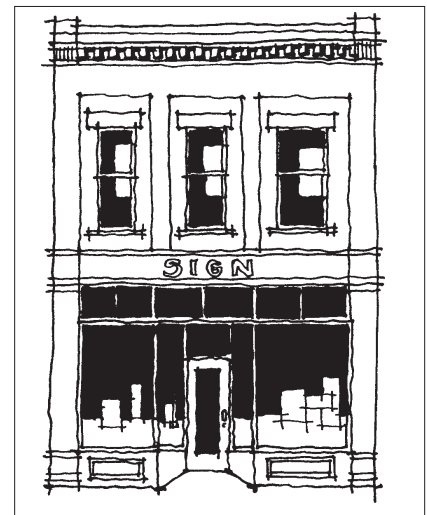### 5.24 Higher light levels may be provided at street intersections, if necessary.
- Taller poles, with higher intensity lamps, may be used in these locations. Cobra style street lights are examples.

Higher light levels may be provided at street intersections, if necessary.

The light pole, or standard, should be designed to accommodate special decorative accessories.

6. Signs

Traditionally, commercial signs have been a part of the character of downtown Lexington. Early photographs include a variety of signs, which occurred in five types:

- Medium-sized, square or rectangularly-shaped signs that projected from the building above the awnings or canopies; printed on both sides

- Small, horizontally-oriented rectangular signs that protruded from the building below the awnings or canopies but above pedestrians' heads; printed on both sides

- Medium- to large-sized, horizontally-oriented rectangular signs attached flat against the building, above and/or below the awnings; printed on one side only

- Large "blade" signs (i.e., vertically-oriented, tall signs) that projected from the second or third/fourth floors of a building, above awnings or canopies; printed on both sides

- Window signs, painted on glass; used at the street level and on upper floors

Historically, signs that were mounted on the exterior advertised the primary business of a building. Typically, this use occupied a street level space and sometimes upper floors as well. Window signs were the only ones used for businesses above. In the case of a large structure that included several businesses on upper floors, the name of the building itself was displayed on an exterior sign. Tenants relied on a directory at the street level.

The overall facade composition, including ornamental details and signs, should be coordinated. Signs also should be in proportion to the building, such that they do not dominate its appearance.

Sizes varied. Most signs were a few square feet in area, but some of the blade signs were quite large. In general, these larger signs were for a cultural or institutional facility, such as a theater, or for an office block. In a few instances, major retailers also used them.

The earliest signs had no lights, but in time a variety of methods were used. Many signs in the early twentieth century had incandescent lamps focused on the sign panel. By the 1903s, some were outlined in lights and by the 1950s, neon appeared occasionally.
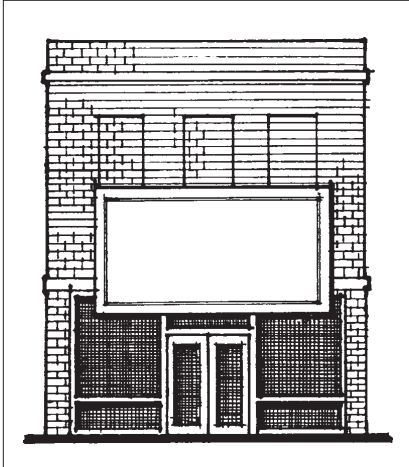
Inappropriate: A sign should be subordinate to the overall building composition.

Where several businesses share a building, coordinate the signs in a directory or use a master sign plan.

Even so, throughout the history of the area, signs have remained subordinate to the architecture. While some large signs have existed, these were relatively limited in number, such that one's overall ability to perceive the character of sets of buildings was maintained. Therefore, the key unifying features of the area, including the alignment of first floor elements and the rhythm of building fronts and windows, have remained clearly visible.

In addition, signs were mounted to fit within architectural features. In many cases, they were mounted flush above the storefront, just above moldings. Others were located between columns or centered in "panels" on a building face. This method also enabled one to perceive the design character of individual structures.

Therefore, these traditions, of having a diversity of signs that remain subordinate to the overall context, and of signs complementing architectural compositions, should be maintained.

The Sign Context

A sign typically serves two functions: first, to attract attention, and second to convey information, essentially identifying the business or services offered within. If it is well designed, the building front alone can serve the attention-getting function, allowing the sign to be focused on conveying information in a well-conceived manner. All new signs should be developed with the overall context of the building and of the area in mind.

6.1 Consider the building front as part of an overall sign program.
- Coordinate a sign within the overall facade composition.
- A sign should be in proportion to the building, such that it does not dominate the appearance.
- Develop a master sign plan for the entire building; this should be used to guide individual sign design decisions.

6.2 A sign should be subordinate to the overall building composition.
- A sign should appear to be in scale with the facade.
- Locate a sign on a building such that it will emphasize design elements of the facade itself. On an historic building a sign should not obscure architectural details or features.
- Mount a sign to fit within existing architectural features. Use the shape of the sign to help reinforce the horizontal lines of moldings and transoms seen along the street.

Appropriate Sign Types

6.3 A flush-mounted wall sign may be considered.
- When feasible, place a wall sign such that it aligns with others on the block.
- When planning a wall sign, determine if decorative moldings exist that could define a "sign panel." If so, locate a flush-mounted sign such that it fits within a panel formed by moldings or transom panels. When mounted on a building with historic significance a sign should not obscure significant facade features.

6.4 A projecting (blade) sign may be considered.
- A small blade sign should be located near the business entrance, just above the door or to the side of it.
- A large blade sign should be mounted higher, and centered on the facade or positioned at the corner.
- Note that other approvals may be required to allow a sign to overhang the public right-of-way.

6.5 A window sign may be considered.
- A window sign may be painted on a window.
- A window sign should cover no more than approximately twenty-five percent (25%) of the total window area.
- It may be painted on the glass or hung just inside a window.

6.6 A directory sign may be considered.
- Group small, individual signs on a single panel as a directory to make them easier to locate.

Sign Materials

6.7 Sign materials should be compatible with that of the building facade.
- Painted wood and metal are appropriate materials for signs. Their use is encouraged. Unfinished materials, including unpainted wood, are discouraged because they are out of character with the context.
- Highly reflective materials that will be difficult to read are inappropriate.
- Painted signs on blank walls were common historically and may be considered.

Any sign that visually overpowers the building or obscures significant architectural features, such as this one, is inappropriate.

A flush-mounted sign, located directly above the entry way, is appropriate.

A window sign may be considered. It may be painted on the glass or hung just inside a window.

Symbol signs add interest to the street, are quickly read and are remembered better than written words.

Preserve an historic painted sign where it exists, when feasible.

Sign Content

6.8 Using a symbol for a sign is encouraged.
- A symbol sign adds interest to the street, can be read quickly and is remembered better than written words.

6.9 Use colors for the sign that are compatible with those of the building front.

6.10 A simple sign design is preferred.
- Typefaces that are in keeping with those seen in the area traditionally are encouraged.
- Also limit the number of colors used on a sign. In general, no more than three colors should be used.

6.11 Select letter styles and sizes that will be compatible with the building front.
- Avoid hard-to-read or overly intricate typeface styles.

6.12 Preserve an historic painted sign where it exists, when feasible.

Sign Lighting

6.13 Indirect lighting is preferred for a sign.
- Indirect lighting, that which is directed at a sign from an external, shielded lamp, is preferred.
- A warm light, similar to daylight, is preferred.

6.14 If internal illumination is used, it should be designed to be subordinate to the overall building composition.
- Internal illumination of an entire sign panel is discouraged. If internal illumination is used, a system that backlights sign text only is preferred.
- Neon and other tubular illumination may be considered. However, use neon in limited amounts so it does not become visually obtrusive.

Appendix A

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings are general rehabilitation guidelines established by the U.S. National Park Service. These standards are policies that serve as a basis for design principles presented in this document that address historic properties. The Secretary's Standards state that:

1. A property shall be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, shall not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used.
8. Archeological resources shall be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.

9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Design for alternations and additions to existing properties should not be discouraged when such alterations and additions do not destroy significant historical, architectural or cultural material. Such design should be compatible with the size, scale, color, material and character of the property, neighborhood and environment.

Appendix B

Glossary of Terms

Alignment. The arrangement of objects along a straight line.

Appurtenance. An additional object added to a building; typically includes vents, exhausts hoods, air conditioning units, etc.

Association. As related to the determination of "integrity" of a property, *association* refers to a link of an historic property with an historic event, activity or person. Also, the quality of integrity through which an historic property is linked to a particular past time and place.

Building. A resource created principally to shelter any form of human activity, such as a house.

Contributing Resource. A building, site, structure or object adding to the historic significance of an historic district.

Corbelling. A series of projections, each stepped out further than the one below it; most often found on brick walls and chimney stacks.

Cornice. The continuous projection at the top of a wall. The top course or molding of a wall when it serves as a crowning member.

Design. As related to the determination of "integrity" of a property, *design* refers to the elements that create the physical form, plan, space, structure and style of a property.

Dormer. A window set upright in a sloping roof. The term is also used to refer to the roofed projection in which this window is set.

Elevation. A mechanically accurate, "head-on" drawing of the face of a building or object, without any allowance for the effect of the laws of perspective. Any measurement on an elevation will be in a fixed proportion, or scale, to the corresponding measurement on the real building.

Facade. Front or principal face of a building; any side of a building that faces a street or other open space.

Feeling. As related to the determination of "integrity" of a property, *feeling* refers to how an historic property evokes the aesthetic or historic sense of past time and place.

Fenestration. The arrangement of windows and other exterior openings on a building.

Form. The overall shape of a structure (i.e., most structures are rectangular in form).

Frame. A window component. See window parts.

Gable. The portion, above eave level, of an end wall of a building with a pitched or gambrel roof. In the case of a pitched roof this takes the form of a triangle. The term is also used sometimes to refer to the whole end wall.

Glazing. Fitting glass into windows and doors.

Head. The top horizontal member over a door or window opening.

Historic Area. A significant concentration of sites, buildings, structures or objects united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development.

In-Kind Replacement. To replace a feature of a building with materials of the same characteristics, such as material, texture, color, etc.

Kickplate. The horizontal element or assembly at the base of a storefront and which is parallel to a public walkway. The kickplate provides a transition between the ground and storefront glazing area.

Location. As related to the determination of "integrity" of a property, *location* refers to an historic property existing in the same place as it did during the period of significance.

Mass. The physical size and bulk of a structure.

Masonry. Construction materials such as stone, brick, concrete block or tile.

Material. As related to the determination of "integrity" of a property, *material* refers to the physical elements that were combined or deposited in a particular pattern or configuration to form an historic property.

Module. The appearance of a single facade plane, despite being part of a larger building. One large building can incorporate several building modules.

Molding. A decorative band or strip of material with a constant profile or section designed to cast interesting shadows. It is generally used in cornices and as trim around window and door openings.

Noncontributing Resource. A building, site, structure or object that does not add to the historic significance of a property.

Parapet. A low wall or railing often used around a balcony or along the edge of a roof.

Period of Significance. Span of time in which a property attained the significance.

Property. Area of land containing a single historic resource or a group of resources.

Orientation. Generally, *orientation* refers to the manner in which a building relates to the street. The entrance to the building plays a large role in the orientation of a building; whereas, it should face the street.

Pediment. A triangular section framed by a horizontal molding on its base and two sloping moldings on each of its sides. Usually used as a crowning member for doors, windows and mantles.

Preservation. The act or process of applying measures to sustain the existing form, integrity and materials of a building or structure, and the existing form and vegetative cover of a site. It may include initial stabilization work, where necessary, as well as ongoing maintenance of the historic building materials.

Protection. The act or process of applying measures designed to affect the physical condition of a property by defending or guarding it from deterioration, loss or attack or to cover or shield the property from danger of injury. In the case of buildings and structures, such treatment is generally of a temporary nature and anticipates future historic preservation treatment; in the case of archaeological sites, the protective measure may be temporary or permanent.

Reconstruction. The act or process of reproducing by new construction the exact form and detail of a vanished building, structure or object, or part thereof, as it appeared at a specific period of time.

Recessed Entry. A common component of an historic storefront. Display windows, which contained dry goods and other wares for sale, flanked the recessed entry historically.

Rehabilitation. The act or process of returning a property to a state of utility through repair or alteration that makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions or features of the property which are significant to its historical, architectural and cultural value.

Renovation. The act or process of returning a property to a state of utility through repair or alteration that makes possible a contemporary use.

Restoration. The act or process of accurately recovering the form and details of a property and its setting as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of later work or by the replacement of missing earlier work.

Roof. The top covering of a building. Following are some types:
* ***Gable roof*** has a pitched roof with ridge and vertical ends.
* ***Hip roof*** has sloped ends instead of vertical ends.
* ***Shed roof*** (lean-to) has one slope only and is built against a higher wall.

Sash. See window parts.

Scale. The size of structure as it appears to the pedestrian.

Setting. As related to the determination of "integrity" of a property, *setting* refers to the physical environment of an historic property.

Side Light. A usually long, fixed sash located beside a door or window; often found in pairs.

Sill. The lowest horizontal member in a frame or opening for a window or door. Also, the lowest horizontal member in a framed wall or partition.

Size. The dimensions in height and width of a building's face.

Stabilization. The fact or process of applying measures designed to reestablish a weather resistant enclosure and the structural stability of an unsafe or deteriorated property while maintaining the essential form as it exists at present.

Storefront. The street level facade of a commercial building, usually having display windows.

Sreetscape. Generally, the *streetscape* refers to the character of the street, or how elements of the street form a cohesive environment.

Traditional. Based on or established by the history of the area.

Transom Window. A small window or series of panes above a door, or above a casement or double-hung window.

Vernacular. This means that a building does not have details associated with a specific architectural style, but is a simple building with modest detailing and form. Historically, factors often influencing vernacular building were things such as local building materials, local climate and building forms used by successive generations.

Visual Continuity. A sense of unity or belonging together that elements of the built environment exhibit because of similarities among them.

Window Parts. The moving units of a window are known as *sashes* and move within the fixed *frame*. The *sash* may consist of one large *pane* of glass or may be subdivided into smaller panes by thin members called *muntins* or *glazing bars*. Sometimes in nineteenth-century houses windows are arranged side by side and divided by heavy vertical wood members called *mullions*.

Workmanship. As related to the determination of "integrity" of a property, *workmanship* refers to the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture, people or artisan.

Appendix C

Additional Information

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